Daily Report

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NOTICE TO READERS: As of 13 March 1991, Moscow domestic radio sourcelines in the DAILY REPORT will reflect how a station identifies itself. This change eliminates the "Domestic Service" designation in favor of the station identification as broadcast. The presence of a new radio sourceline reflects this change in policy, rather than the establishment of a new station or network.

An * indicates material not disseminated in electronic form.

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Churkin 15 Mar Briefing Summarized

LD1503152491 Moscow TASS in English 1457 GMT 15 Mar 91

[By TASS correspondents Mikhail Ivanov, Aleksandr Kanishchev, and Igor Peskov]

[Text] Moscow March 15 TASS—A meeting between foreign ministers of the Soviet Union and Iceland does not seem probable at the moment. However, since the Icelandic side is ready to give explanations, requested by the USSR, the Soviet ambassador to Iceland Igor Krasavin will go to Reykjavik to listen to the Icelandic side.

Such is the essence of the message delivered on February 15 to the Soviet Embassy in Iceland in response to the proposal of Icelandic Foreign Minister Jon Baldvin Hannibalsson to hold an urgent meeting with Soviet Foreign Minister Aleksandr Bessmertnykh, Vitaliy Churkin said at a briefing here today. The question of holding the meeting for giving to the Soviet side the explanations expected by it was raised by the Icelandinc minister through the embassy of his country in the USSR.

The Soviet Foreign Ministry spokesman recalled that a note of the Soviet Foreign Ministry concerning the resolution of the Icelandic Althing of February 11 about the establishment of diplomatic relations with Lithuania as an independent republic had been delivered to the Icelandic Embassy in the USSR on February 13. The note described the decision of the Icelandic parliament as an attempt to interfere in the internal affairs of the Soviet Union. It was also reported that in connection with the unfriendly action of Iceland Soviet Ambassador to Iceland Igor Krasavin had been recalled to Moscow for consultations until corresponding explanations are received.

Churkin Briefs Press on Various Issues 16 Mar

Describes Baker-Bessmertnykh Talks

LD1603135191 Moscow TASS International Service in Russian 1255 GMT 16 Mar 91

[By TASS diplomatic correspondents Mikhail Ivanov and Aleksandr Kanishchev]

[Text] Moscow, 16 Mar (TASS)—"The ministers' talks showed the reliability of Soviet-American relations, which retain a tendency to develop further," said Vitaliy Churkin, head of the USSR Foreign Ministry's Information Directorate, as he summed up at today's briefing the conversations between USSR Foreign Minister Aleksandr Bessmertnykh and U.S. Secretary of State James Baker in Moscow.

"As a result of the discussions that have taken place, one can speak of a certain advance and of the fact that it has proved possible to bring closer the solution of the questions that still remain," the USSR Foreign Ministry spokesman noted. "The sides have agreed to continue to maintain permanent contact with each other."

Vitaliy Churkin announced that, on 16 March, a further meeting had taken place between the heads of the foreign policy departments of the USSR and the United States, which lasted about an hour and a half. Also continuing their meetings first thing in the morning were the two countries' experts who, in the light of discussion of problems of the talks with the USSR president, were seeking ways and approaches toward removing the anxiety that still exists over questions of conventional weapons and armed forces in Europe.

"For the immediate future, priority in Soviet-American relations will evidently be given to the dialogue on the problems of the Persian Gulf and of the Near East as a whole, and also to completing work on the treaty on strategic offensive arms reduction and removing the anxiety over the treaty on conventional arms in Europe," the diplomat noted. "A number of new agreements are being prepared in the bilateral sphere which will broaden the basis of Soviet-American cooperation, including economic cooperation."

Vitaliy Churkin said that in Moscow the sides reaffirmed their desire to complete in the very near future the drawing-up of the strategic offensive arms treaty and sign it at a summit meeting. "The accord under which the summit will be held in the first half of 1991 remains in force," he said.

In the sphere of conventional arms, the Soviet side—as a gesture of goodwill with the aim of ensuring ratification of the treaty on conventional arms reduction in Europe—put forward a number of ideas which, in his opinion, are a good foundation for achieving mutual understanding and provide answers to all the questions which have arisen in this connection, the USSR Foreign Ministry spokesman said.

"We hope", he added, "that after these ideas have been studied in Washington, the American side will come to the same conclusion."

The diplomat noted further that regional problems were given considerable prominence at the talks in Moscow. As a result fo their exchange of views on Central American, the USSR foreign minister and the U.S. secretary of state decided to issue a joint statement containing an appeal to the government and the Farabundo Marti Liberation Front of El Salavador to speed up negotiations aimed at ending the conflict and achieving national reconciliation in the interests of progress in that country and regional disarmament throughout Central America.

Joint Statement on El Salvador

LD1603190191 Moscow TASS International Service in Russian 1320 GMT 16 Mar 91

[By TASS diplomatic correspondents Mikhail Ivanov and Aleksandr Kanishchev]

[Text] Moscow, 16 Mar (TASS)—Vitaliy Churkin, head of the USSR Foreign Ministry's Information Directorate, at a briefing in Moscow today read out a joint Soviet-U.S. statement on El Salvador, which was adopted during the three-day visit to the USSR by U.S. Secretary of State James Baker which ended today. The statement says:

"As a result of an exchange of views on Central America, during which there was a detailed consideration of questions relating to the talks being held in El Salvador under UN supervision, USSR Foreign Minister Aleksandr Bessmertnykh and U.S. Secretary of State James Baker adopted a decision to issue the following joint statement:

"Although the talks between the government of El Salvador and the Farabundo Marti National Liberation Front [FMLN] which have been held over recent months with the mediation of the UN secretary general, have not as yet been successful from the viewpoint of securing final comprehensive accords on restoring peace in the country, they, nevertheless, instil hope that both of the sides involved in the conflict realize the pointlessness of banking on military force and the need to seek political means to overcome the differences between them. The government and the FMLN have managed to draw their positions closer together on a number of important issues specified in the Geneva and Caracas agreements.

"The USSR foreign minister and the U.S. secretary of state confirmed their conviction that the achievement of mutually acceptable decisions to promote a settlement of the crisis in El Salvador is possible only by political means worked out at the negotiating table. They stated their readiness to extend every kind of assistance for the speediest possible achievements of success at the talks. They emphasized the great importance of the mediation efforts of the UN secretary general and again expressed the hope that the group of 'friends of the secretary general' (Spain, Mexico, Venezuela, and Colombia) will be able to play an active role in providing support for the talks.

"In this regard, the ministers emphasized the importance of the elections to El Salvador's legislative and municipal bodies on 10 March 1991 for normalizing the situation in the country and in Central America and noted the determination displayed in this period by the majority of Salvadorans not to resort to violent actions. They expressed the hope that these elections will accelerate the national reconciliation process in El Salvador and will foster efforts directed at halting the conflict through talks.

"The USSR and the United States have called on both sides to accelerate the negotiations process. They noted the importance of reaching political accords leading to a cease-fire and confirmed that a negotiated political settlement in El Salvador ensuring the political rights and security of all Salvadorans would also help the process in the sphere of democratization, development, and regional disarmament throughout the whole of Central America."

Mideast Exchange Called 'Useful'

LD1603233191 Moscow TASS International Service in Russian 1411 GMT 16 Mar 91

[Report on news conference by Vitaliy Churkin, head of the USSR Foreign Ministry's Information Directorate, with correspondents in Moscow on 16 March]

[Excerpt] Moscow, 16 Mar (TASS)—[passage omitted] Churkin thoroughly briefed the journalists on the fundamental ideas on the foundations of the postcrisis order in the Persian Gulf area that were set out by the Soviet side during negotiations with U.S. Secretary of State James Baker.

Answering a question on the U.S. response to the Soviet ideas, Vitaliy Churkin noted that they were received "positively." He described the exchange of opinions on the Middle East as useful and gave a positive evaluation on the results of the discussion as a whole.

"It was not the task of the meeting for the sides to work out some sort of bilateral agreement on the problem," Vitaliy Churkin said. "An important process has started of broad dialogue on the problem of a postcrisis settlement in the Persian Gulf and on the Arab-Israeli conflict in the conditions that have taken shape since the war in the Persian Gulf, and we hope that it will continue."

In reply to the question on relations between the USSR and the PLO, the diplomat said: "We will proceed on the assumption that the PLO is an internationally recognized representative of the Palestinian people."

The journalists were also interested to know whether the USSR's ideas on the postcrisis order in the Persian Gulf region have any relevance to the present Iraqi regime headed by Husayn. "What we have in mind are not regimes but states, and Iraq is a Middle East state," the USSR Foreign Ministry spokesman said. "This factor must be considered. The system may be stable and reliable only if it does not attempt to count out any of the states."

In reply to a question from a TASS correspondent concerning the holding of another meeting of the heads of the USSR's and the U.S.'s foreign policy departments, Vitaliy Churkin said: "This meeting may probably take place in the not-too-distant future. Now, both countries have reached the level of relations and the degree of closeness, from the viewpoint of working contacts, that it should not take a long time to organize such a meeting."

Disarmament Talks Noted

LD1503161891 Moscow TASS in English 1513 GMT 15 Mar 91

[By TASS diplomatic correspondents Mikhail Ivanov, Aleksandr Kanishchev and Igor Peskov]

[Text] Moscow March 15 TASS—Soviet Foreign Minister Aleksandr Bessmertnykh and U.S. Secretary of State James Baker held a total of four-odd hours in one-to-one talks on Thursday and Friday, Soviet Foreign Ministry Spokesman Vitaliy Churkin told a news briefing here today.

He said Baker was meeting President Mikhail Gorbachev in the Kremlin.

Experts, in particular those on disarmament, were holding parallel negotiations, Churkin said.

Those talks were led on the Soviet side by Military Chief of Staff Army General Mikhail Moiseyev and Deputy Foreign Minister Aleksey Obukhov.

Churkin said they had voiced considerations on ways to resolve issues arising in connection with the treaty limiting conventional weapons in Europe. Those ideas, according to him, "were received by the U.S. experts with interest".

Experts on strategic offensive arms also went into talks today.

Churkin also reported intensive preparations for the forthcoming visit to Japan by President Gorbachev. Bessmertnykh's visit to Tokyo on March 29-31 would be an important part of that work, the spokesman said.

Speaking of Erich Honecker's transfer to the Soviet Union, he said German Chancellor Helmut Kohl had been informed of plans to move Honecker to Moscow several hours in advance. Churkin said the transfer had been necessitated by humanitarian considerations, namely the need to give specialist medical treatment to Honecker, who is seriously ill.

Asked if the Cyprus issue had been raised during Turkish President Turgut Ozal's recent visit to Moscow, the spokesman said the issue had been discussed by the Soviet and Turkish foreign ministers.

He added that the Soviet stand in favour of the independence, sovereignty and territorial integrity of Cyprus remained "consistent and unchanged".

"It is important now to ensure the effective continuation of the U.N. secretary-general's mission of good offices and help him actuate the mechanism for finding an enduring and mutually acceptable solution to the problem," Churkin said.

"We are for active cooperation towards this end within the framework of the Security Council, first of all among its permanent members, in order to preserve on Cyprus and around it a situation felicitous to securing constructive shifts in the direction of a settlement."

Churkin also announced next week's visits by German Foreign Minister Hans-Dietrich Genscher and British Foreign Secretary Douglas Hurd.

Genscher, whose working visit is scheduled for March 17-18, will come soon after the Soviet ratification of the treaty on a final settlement with regard to Germany and other related agreements, which, the spokesman said, "marks a new stage in our bilateral relations".

Hurd's working visit, from March 19-22, will begin with his arrival in the Ukrainian capital Kiev. The Soviet-British talks in Moscow on March 21 will continue the discussion of the more important international problems and bilateral relations with account taken of the results of Prime Minister John Major's recent visit to the USSR.

The spokesman said that Polish President Lech Walesa recently had been invited to pay an official visit to the Soviet Union in April-May. Walesa accepted the invitation and the time of the visit will be agreed later, according to Churkin.

Soviet Gulf Policy Examined

LD1603151991 Moscow TASS International Service in Russian 1325 GMT 16 Mar 91

[By TASS diplomatic correspondents Mikhail Ivanov and Aleksandr Kanishchev]

[Text] Moscow, 16 Mar (TASS)—"The key role in defining the parameters of the post-crisis arrangement in the Persian Gulf, undoubtedly, belongs primarily to the states located in the region." This is one of the main points of the ideas on the fundamentals of the post-crisis arrangement in the Persian Gulf which were set out by the Soviet side during talks with U.S. Secretary of State James Baker, which ended in Moscow today. Vitaliy Churkin, chief of the Information Directorate of the Soviet Foreign policy department, acquainted journalists with them in detail at a briefing at the USSR Foreign Ministry press center.

He noted that, in the Soviet side's opinion, it should not be a matter of establishing exclusive bloc groupings, shut off from others, in the region: This would be a factor encouraging new antagonisms to arise and giving nourishment to old ones. The post-crisis settlement must not be directed against anybody, whoever it is. On the contrary, it must encourage interaction by all the interested countries in the region, and also by states which do not belong to it, but make an important contribution toward maintaining peace and stability there.

Other points in the arguments of the Soviet Union set forth by Vitaliy Churkin include taking consistent steps to limit the arms race in the region and create an effective barrier to the proliferation of nuclear, chemical,

and other weapons of mass destruction, and an examination of the question of a "balanced reduction" of arms deliveries to the region.

The Soviet side believes it would be useful to make use of the experience of other regions regarding implementation of trust-building measures, such as giving notification of military maneuvers and inviting observers to attend them, and setting up demilitarized zones and zones of reduced arms concentration.

The Soviet side also believes that the foreign military presence should not exceed the levels in the region on 1 August 1990. The Soviet Union also advocates establishing all-around economic cooperation among the countries of the area—first and foremost to restore its ruined economies.

The Soviet Union feels that the United Nations has an important part to play in providing outside support for a post-crisis settlement in the Persian Gulf. The view here is that the United Nations is in the best position to act as a reliable guarantor of the observance of accords. Still relevent is the Soviet suggestion that "some sort of navy under the UN flag" be set up in the event of a threat to navigation in the Gulf. There is also justification for resuming discussion of the issue of reactivating the UN Military Staff Committee in crisis situations.

The task of easing military tension in the sub-region of the Persian Gulf and in the Near East as a whole requires purposeful efforts to remove the political causes of the instability and conflicts there. In the Soviet side's view, the unanimous support of the international community for a quick and radical improvement of the situation in the region, where the interests of a broad range of states are intertwined, is creating more favorable conditions for urgently tackling the settlement of the Arab-Israeli conflict. The success of efforts in this area will make it possible to incorporate the system of security being set up in the Persian Gulf into wider regional structures.

Expressing these considerations, the Soviet side does not at all lay claim to possessing the ultimate truth. It believes that producing a new quality of interstate relations in the regions will require intensive political and diplomatic efforts, with the participation of the widest range of countries involved. The Soviet Union is prepared to make its own contribution with a view to a very rapid advance toward resolving problems of the post-crisis structure in the Persian Gulf, toward discussing any constructive ideas, and toward vigorous interaction with all sides involved.

United States & Canada

Baker's Moscow Visit, Consultations Continue

15 Mar Gorbachev Talks Described

PM1703144391 Moscow PRAVDA in Russian Second Edition 16 Mar 91, p 1,5

[Text] On 15 Mar the USSR president met with U.S. Secretary of State James Baker today. From the very start of their conversation the two men were in the atmosphere of friendly, open dialogue that is characteristic of their personal relations over the last two years at least.

In principle, the president stressed right away, nothing has changed on our side in our approach to Soviet-U.S. relations. This is particularly important since they have just gone through a complicated phase, and as before the USSR and the United States have a lot of important joint business.

Confirming this, J. Baker considered it necessary to once more note the huge progress in Soviet-U.S. relations over recent years and the USSR president's role in the vast changes that have taken place in the Soviet Union and in the whole world. In view of the various rumors about the U.S. Administration's policy, in the name of his President he stated that the Soviet leadership is the United States' partner. The U.S. tradition of mixing with various public and political circles in other countries, including opposition circles, changes nothing in this principled arrangement.

J. Baker recalled that the United States recognizes the Soviet Union within its 1939 borders. In contacts with representatives of the Baltic republics the Administration is striving to do nothing which could damage the legal peaceful process of relations between them and the USSR Government.

The secretary of state confirmed that the President, he, and many people in his country sincerely hope that perestroyka ends in success, and that this is important not just for the USSR but also for the United States and the whole world. We, he said to Mikhail Gorbachev, do not want to believe that you have deviated from your main goal, and that deep down you have changed, as if "seized" by the forces of the past.

Answering this statement, which is extremely important for Soviet-U.S. mutual understanding, Mikhail Gorbachev stated that his support for the policy taken remains the same. For me, he noted, this decision is final, and I reached it a long time ago. I do not intend to change either my view or my convictions. As to the socialist choice, I believe that the mixed economy does not contradict it. Neither does political pluralism. Legislative democracy and glasnost do not contravene socialism, just like economic and political freedom.

During the past six years, perestroyka has gone through different stages. It can now be seen that we were not able to give a thorough evaluation to and foresee everything. Society proved too hard to motivate to receive calmly all the large-scale changes, especially when the most vital interests were involved. It is now clear that a long path is lying ahead. We have been less than careful, having prompted enormous premature expectations. They were not accompanied, as we were hoping, by the rapid realization that everyone must live and work differently rather than banking that a new life will be granted from above. Shedding habits of a distributional system required setting up conditions for real labor incentives. But that is only possible on the basis of a radical change in relations of ownership and the transfer to a market economy.

So what are the president's difficulties and the opposition's reserves? They are one and the same—social tension and the situation in the market. The opposition is using this to stir up the masses. The country's leadership, however, must relieve the tension caused by its actions and improve the situation.

I firmly believe that the problems can be only resolved by constitutional means. This is a weakness, but it is also a strength. A strength because society and the individual, having gained freedom, can implement their democratic rights and opportunities. A weakness because when these rights are abused it is very difficult to resort to violence, even if it is legitimate and justified. Herein lies the specific character of perestroyka. It is not a question of presidential powers but of a moral-political orientation. Everything in our country has always been settled, in the final instance, by violence. The political culture was the following: If you are my opponent, and I am in power, you must be put into prison, at the very least. Now we have recognized the legitimacy of pluralism both in the economy and in politics, as well as in public life as a whole. But all this still has happened and it is now feeling labor pains. This is why an enormous reserve of faith, conviction, and resolve is needed in order to keep the situation under control and not to go off the tracks. This is now the main task. Opposition is natural since we are moving toward a rule-of-law, democratic state. When a political stance boils down to just opposition, however, this works in a destructive way. This is the danger.

Now we have two main tasks: not to allow a fall in production and as far as possible to bring the market back to normal, and this means finances as well; and to reform the Union. All these things must be kept within the democratic ideas of perestroyka. We will need to make political and economic maneuvers.

They are inevitable but they change neither the aim nor the choice of the constitutional means to achieve it. No pressure, either from the right or the left, will force us to depart from this path. The stability of Soviet-U.S. relations also depends on a correct understanding of the special nature of the situation in the USSR, the president emphasized. They have been through an acute period of

trials and have withstood them. It has not been simple or easy for you or for us to manage this. But having passed the test we and the whole world have become convinced again of the international importance of Soviet-U.S. cooperation and the need for it. Attempts to cast a shadow on this cooperation—and such attempts are being undertaken both in the United States and the Soviet Union, and in other countries—and to damage it, to cause distrust, should not be taken notice of at the state level.

J. Baker received these reflections, ones natural for the nature and the level of the Soviet-U.S. dialogue, with understanding. He commented on them interesting and profound reform, especially economic, and the transformation of the Union. He debated, without being conciliatory, and offered advice in a friendly fashion. On the basis that the situation in the Persian Gulf and in the Near East were discussed in advance yesterday at talks between James Baker and Aleksandr Bessmertnykh, there was no need to go into detail. An exchange of views and information did take place in terms of principles, however.

Mikhail Gorbachev gave James Baker ideas in writing concerning a settlement of the post-crisis situation in the Persian Gulf. He noted the existence of similar and even coinciding features in their approaches.

He stressed that it is important to continue to rely on the UN machinery and act on the basis that the first place in resolving the problems must belong to the countries of the region—neither Iraq nor Iran must be excluded from the settlement. He drew attention to the problem of the coalition troops withdrawal in light of the fact that the military phase of the conflict has been completed.

The president felt that the situation as a whole is more favorable to a settlement in this region which is so important to the world community. It demands a very attentive and responsible attitude and, above all, open cooperation by all who can and Must and can make a contribution.

They examined the problem that has arisen leading up to the ratification of the treaty on conventional arms in Europe. New proposals that will provide a final resolution to the problems that have arisen were put to James Baker, but at first glance these did not satisfy the secretary of state. The experts were at once instructed to rework them and then, perhaps, "conclude the issue" ["zakryt vopros"] in the coming days.

Other questions were also touched on in this conversation lasting almost four hours. It took place in an amicable and sincere atmosphere and marked one more step in the deepening of Soviet-U.S. interaction.

Mikhail Gorbachev asked Mr. Baker to convey to President George Bush his best wishes and his gratitude for the warm letter he recently received from him.

Taking part in the meeting were A.A. Bessmertnykh, A.S. Chernyayev, and D. Ross

Dinner Held With Republics Leaders

LD1503191491 Moscow TASS International Service in Russian 1835 GMT 15 Mar 91

[By TASS diplomatic correspondent]

[Text] Moscow, 15 Mar (TASS)—This evening the U.S. ambassador to the USSR, Jack Matlock, gave a dinner in honor of U.S. Secretary of State James Baker, who is visiting the Soviet Union.

Present at the dinner were the leaders of a number of Union republics, including the chairman of the Supreme Soviet of Georgia, Zviad Gamsakhurdiya; the prime minister of Armenia, Vazgen Manukyan; the prime minister of Kyrgyzstan Nasirdin Isanov; and also the chairman of the Moscow and Leningrad soviets of People's Deputies, Gavriil Popov and Anatoliy Sobchak; Metropolitan Kirill of Smolensk and Kaliningrad, chairman of the department of external church relations of the Moscow Patriarchate; and representatives of the public.

News Conference Held

LD1503212991 Moscow TASS in English 2107 GMT 15 Mar 91

[By TASS diplomatic correspondents Mikhail Ivanov, Aleksandr Kanishchev, Igor Peskov, and Georgiy Shmelev]

[Text] Moscow March 15 TASS—The issue of a new Soviet-U.S. summit has not been specifically discussed, Soviet Foreign Minister Aleksandr Bessmertnykh told a news conference here today.

Bessmertnykh was addressing a joint news conference with U.S. Secretary of State James Baker on the results of the latter's meeting with President Mikhail Gorbachev.

"We continue discussing arms reductions, and the date of a new Soviet-U.S. summit will depend on the success of the dialogue. We have an agreement, and I hope the summit will be held in the first half of this year," Bessmertnykh said.

Soviet Foreign Minister Aleksandr Bessmertnykh said the Soviet president and the U.S. secretary of state actively discussed Middle East problems.

The president outlined the Soviet Union's position concerning a post-war settlement in the Gulf. The sides noted "similarity of their approaches to searching a mutually acceptable basis for moving towards a Gulf settlement", Bessmertnykh said.

The sides discussed ways to create a security and peaceful development system in the Gulf. Bessmertnykh noted that countries of the region should play the main

role in this process, but there is also a "good chance for U.N. Security Council permanent members, including the Soviet Union".

Speaking about the idea to convene an international conference on the Middle East, Bessmertnykh said the issue remained "pressing, and it is an important part of our approach to settling problems in the region".

"At the same time, we believe that there could be many variants of approaches," he said. An international conference should be an integral part of the process, but it should not eliminate "other possible approaches to the problem".

Asked about the Soviet Union's attitude to the Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO), Bessmertnykh said "the PLO is still an organisation representing the interests of Palestinians, and while it is so, I believe the PLO should be involved in discussing problems connected with a Middle East settlement, as the Palestinian problem is still its core".

Asked about the possibility of establishing diplomatic relations with Israel, Bessmertnykh said "this is part of a Middle East settlement". He believes "it is quite possible that time is coming for restoring diplomatic relations". Bessmertnykh said he hoped that this will be done "in the near future".

The Soviet foreign minister stressed that at the talks in Moscow the two sides had discussed Soviet-American relations "in a broad and specific way." "It is very important to state that both sides intend to develop these relations on a stable basis, in all the principal directions," he said. Bessmertnykh pointed out that they had discussed in detail specific issues dealing with bilateral cooperation, for instance, the concluding of additional agreements, "which are ready or will soon be ready to be signed." He expressed hope that some of those agreements might be signed during the next meetings of the two countries' ministers.

"The most important thing is that Soviet-American relations have passed through a complicated trial period and successfully overcame it, thus ensuring for themselves a reliable enough perspective for further development," Bessmertnykh stressed.

Touching upon disarmament problems, Bessmertnykh pointed out that now the main problem was to remove the two countries' misgivings over the treaty on conventional armaments.

"They were discussed during the two rounds of sessions of the working group. We touched upon this problem on the level of ministers, when additional effort was exerted with the aim to "find a way to settling this problem.

"We put forward some proposals which, in our opinion, show the way out. The most important thing is that we do not stop efforts aimed at settling the existing problems," Bessmertnykh said.

According to James Baker, the sides have some problems to settle in connection with conventional armaments in Europe. He said that they had not yet resolved all problems dealing with strategic weapons, that he had just heard a report of the working group: They had been working for two hours, but no agreement had been reached so far. Perhaps, another meeting will be held on Saturday morning.

Responding to a TASS question about the results of the discussion of the prospects of Soviet-American cooperation in the settlement of regional conflicts, Bessmertnykh pointed out: "We discussed these problems for a long time. We have a rather good record of the search for ways to settle them. Special attention was devoted to the problems of Afghanistan, Central America and Cambodia. Much experience has been accumulated in this sphere, and I believe that it will help resolve other regional problems, primarily the Middle East problem."

Asked by a TASS diplomatic correspondent if the domestic situation in the USSR had been discussed during the conversation with the Soviet president, Baker said that much time had been devoted to this. He said the president had been very honest and set out his view of the situation in the country, and had also spoken about the efforts to establish "relations between the centre and republican governments, and dwelt on the matters of the economic reform. He said Gorbachev very honestly discussed the situation.

Baker said Gorbachev had confirmed his adherence to the process of reforms and the intention of the Union government to continue perestroya, the policy of democratisation, pluralism and economic reforms. In this sense Gorbachev had spoken of specific steps to encourage the development of a mixed economy.

Baker said the United States supported Gorbachev's efforts to continue reforms in the USSR to ensure political pluralism, as well as economic reforms to promote greater freedom.

Baker said that the situation in the Baltic had been discussed during the conversation with the Soviet president. He said Gorbachev had stated that he and the Union government intended to resolve problems connected with the Baltic on the basis of a dialogue and negotiations.

Special representatives were appointed to participate in that dialogue. He said that in Gorbachev's opinion the Baltic Republics should also appoint their participants in the talks.

Baker said Gorbachev had expressed the hope that the problem would be resolved by peaceful means and he had told Gorbachev the United States would support such a decision.

Baker said the situation in the Baltic was at present much better than in January and that the existence of progress should be noted. He said the U.S. would wish the

negotiations would really be held and that the sides would participate in them on the basis of goodwill.

Meets Baltics Officials 16 Mar

LD1603161991 Vilnius Radio Vilnius in Lithuanian 1500 GMT 16 Mar 91

[Text] The permanent representative of the Lithuanian government at the Soviet Union's Cabinet of Ministers, Egidijus Bickauskas, describes this morning's meeting at the residence of the U.S. Ambassador in Moscow with U.S. Secretary of State James Baker:

[Begin recording] [Bickauskas] A meeting of representatives of the Baltic states with U.S. Secretary of State Baker took place this morning at the U.S. ambassador's residence in Moscow. The Lithuanian side was represented by me; Latvia was represented by the Latvian representative in Moscow, Peters; Estonia by its representative Kahn. The meeting was also attended by the U.S. ambassador in Moscow, Mr. Matlock, and the [words indistinct] minister without portfolio, Mr. [name indistinct].

The meeting lasted over an hour. During the talk, we informed the secretary of state about the present situation in the Baltic states and their relations with the Soviet Union; we recalled the results of the polls in the Baltic states and also our attitude to the referendum on 17 March organized by the USSR.

Problems concerning possible negotiations between Lithuania, Latvia, and Estonia and the Soviet Union were more extensively discussed. Mr. Baker stressed that the United States is interested that real and true negotiations on independence start, and that the United States will help their beginning within the limits of their possibilities.

Saying that these negotiations should be without any preconditions, the secretary of state pointed out at the same time that the Baltic states have never joined the Soviet Union and they do not have to adhere to the mechanism of secession in their self-determination.

We also denied the Soviet Union's information supplied to Mr. Baker that we are not ready for negotiations, and stressed that the negotiations should be not only negotiations of independent Baltic states by the Soviet Union. We also pointed out that at present the beginning of the negotiations has been made more difficult by the military aggression carried out by the USSR in January, the continuing self-will by the military, and the occupation of buildings in Vilnius and Riga.

Understanding all this, the secretary of state explained that he had obtained an assurance from the Soviet Union that the occupation of buildings would be discontinued.

The secretary of state also noted that the United States intends to continue rendering to Lithuania, Latvia, and Estonia direct medical and humanitarian aid and also, in order to establish better contacts, work is continuing on setting up information centers in the Baltic states.

I think that the meeting passed in a friendly and rather constructive atmosphere, and immediately after the meeting the U.S. secretary went to a meeting with USSR Foreign Minister Bessmertnykh.

[Announcer] About your and esteemed Vaisvila's meeting today with Boris Pugo?

[Bickauskas] Such a meeting took place. It lasted over two hours. Mr. Vaisvila described our claims to the USSR Ministry of Internal Affairs. Attempts were made to find possible constructive solutions to eliminate contradictions at the present stage. It was agreed that it is expedient to wait for negotiations at the highest level, for their beginning and end, as these negotiations could be rather long, and problems which could be solved now, should be discussed. But there can be no talk, and this was understood by the USSR Minister of internal affairs, about relations of subordination; these can only be equal relations in which both partiers are interested. [end recording]

Final Talks With Bessmertnykh Held

LD1603100591 Moscow All-Union Radio Mayak Network in Russian 0906 GMT 16 Mar 91

[Text] A few minutes ago the third and final stage of the talks between the foreign ministers of the USSR and the United States ended. Our special correspondent Andrey Ptashnikov has just contacted the studio by telephone. We are listening to you, Andrey.

[Ptashnikov] Hello. You are absolutely right that the talks ended a few minutes ago or, to be absolutely precise, 15 minutes ago. They started at about 1030 [0730 GMT] so they lasted about an hour and a half.

Immediately after the talks, and as you again said correctly, this was the third round, and let me remind you that the previous two take place yesterday and the day before yesterday. So, this was the concluding round, and after the two ministers came out of the hall where the talks had been held, we journalists managed to get interviews with Comrade Bessmertnykh and James Baker. Unfortunately, I do not have with me here the technical equipment to reproduce this recording live on the air, so I shall try to simply restate what the two ministers said.

So, their opinions coincided that the talks were very intensive but useful. They were held on a whole spectrum of problems, from arms limitation to a Near East settlement. It is natural that a very great deal of attention during the discussion was paid to bilateral relations. As Bessmertnykh, USSR foreign minister, stressed, the talks moved relations between the USSR and the United States forward, although there still remain unresolved areas, including in the sphere of disarmament. But the sides agreed to continue to maintain close contacts and

hope that in the near future at least the main issues which will remain unresolved will be resolved.

In particular, progress was achieved on strategic offensive weapons. Let me remind you that the corresponding treaty on strategic offensive weapons is due to be signed during the next Soviet-U.S. summit meeting. Evidently, everyone knows that it is to take place in Moscow. As Comrade Bessmertnykh stressed, the summit meeting, as was planned earlier, will take place during the first half of the year. From this, it follows that in the time remaining until it is held, the corresponding treaty on strategic offensive weapons should be prepared in its final version.

What else can I say? These are the results in brief of the talks which have been held. But you know, at 1400 [1100 GMT] there is to be a briefing at the press center of USSR Foreign Ministry. It will be conducted by Churkin, chief of the Information Directorate of the Foreign Ministry. As far as I know, it is precisely during this briefing he will dwell in more detail on the results of the talks held in Moscow.

But if one is to talk about other events which have already taken place today or are to take place, then the U.S. secretary of state met this morning with representatives of the Baltic republics, and at this very moment he is meeting with Comrade Shevardnadze, former foreign minister of the USSR. But this will be a private dinner.

Meets With Shevardnadze

PM1703182191 Moscow IZVESTIYA in Russian 18 Mar 91 Union Edition p 4

[TASS report under general headline: "Talks in Moscow Over"]

[Text] On 16 March [U.S. Secretary of State] J. Baker had a meeting in Moscow with Eduard Shevardnadze, president of the Soviet Foreign Policy Association. The conversation—for which Shevardnadze flew home specially from Italy, where he has spent the past few days—was held in Shevardnadze's apartment. He and Baker exchanged opinions on questions of international politics, the broad range of Soviet-U.S. relations, and problems of life in the USSR and the United States.

This meeting marked the end of the series of conversations outside the framework of the official protocol program of the U.S. guest's visit to the USSR.

Commentary Assesses Visit

LD1603110991 Moscow World Service in English 2300 GMT 15 Mar 91

[Vladislav Kozyakov commentary]

[Text] The superpower relations may well be said to have gone through a test trial in the months of the war against Iraq. The two countries are now in the face of another test, no less serious. They are expected to coordinate efforts in forging a reliable security system both in the Gulf and the Middle East, and to make a breakthrough in finalizing a strategic arms reduction treaty as well as in other areas of bilateral relations. Great opportunities do exist for resolving any issues of bilateral concern, but with accounting for each other's interests. There is a solid basis in the form of a series of agreements, and regular contacts between President Gorbachev and Mr. Bush—both in writing and on the line—point to a high level of understanding between them.

Talks in Moscow are somewhat overshadowed by a flare-up of ethnic tensions in the Soviet Union, however, with some speaking nothing short of a total collapse. Washington's current buzz word seems to be the parallel (?track) diplomacy, meaning contacts both with the center and the republics; and Mr. Baker did plan a meeting with local leaders. If this means opening contacts with individual Soviet republics, the trend is only too welcome because under the draft of a new Union treaty each republic is entitled to open diplomatic relations and sign agreements with foreign countries, unless the country's internatioanl obligations are violated. If Washington plans to back up separatists or to fuel ethnic tension, this would be tantamount to meddling in the Soviet Union's internal affairs.

There are issues which give food for thought, however. The superpower draft treaty on a 30 percent cut in each other's strategic arms is said to be 98 percent ready, but the U.S. Congress has again raised the question of a possibility by the United States to go back on the ABM Treaty, which was the main stumbling block to the nuclear arms control talks. The backing of Senator John Warner's amendment to the ABM Treaty by Mr. Bush's national security agent, Mr. Brent Scowcroft, raises the question of a possible linkage between the proposals for a review of the ABM Treaty and a slowdown on the START negotiations.

As so many times before, Moscow and Washington can resolve controversial issues successfully only by way of compromise and mutual desire. Its [word indistinct] for the past few words is good enough evidence of that. But what was good in the past must be good for the future.

Article Reviews Baker Talks in Damascus

PM1803143391 Moscow IZVESTIYA in Russian 15 Mar 91 Union Edition p 5

[Correspondent M. Kozhevnikov report: "Dialogue in Damascus: The Sides Are Satisfied"]

[Text] Damascus—The last stop on U.S. Secretary of State J. Baker's tour of Near Eastern countries was Damascus, where he spent just over 24 hours. Earlier he had visited Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, Egypt, and Israel....

All in all, the U.S.-Syrian consultations lasted more than seven hours. First the complete delegations consulted, and then the dialogue was restricted to a narrow circle:

President H. al-Asad and Foreign Minister F. al-Shar' on the Syrian side, and J. Baker and the U.S. ambassador to Damascus on the U.S. side. The exchange of opinions dragged on deep into the night, and the local and foreign journalists who had gathered in a room in the capital's Sheraton Hotel gave up waiting for the promised news conference by the U.S. secretary of state and his Syrian colleague....

According to official reports, chief attention at the talks in Damascus was devoted to the problem of a Near East settlement. The sides agreed, in particular, that it must be fair and all-embracing in nature and voiced readiness to exert the necessary efforts with a view to overcoming the deadlock in the process of resolving the chronic Arab-Israeli conflict. Syria and the United States confirmed their adherence to the well-known UN Security Council resolutions on the Near East, emphasizing that precisely these must serve as the basis for ensuring lasting peace in this region.

The talks reportedly also devoted due attention to our side's role in the process of a Near East settlement. Thus, citing a spokesman for the U.S. delegation, Radio Monte Carlo noted the talks participants' unanimity that the Soviet Union is undoubtedly a very important element in this process.

The present situation in Lebanon was the second most important question discussed at the meeting in Damascus. Syria and the United States voiced full support for the measures aimed at stabilizing the situation in the country and extending the legitimate power throughout its territory which the Lebanese Government is implementing in accordance with the al-Ta'if accords.

As expected, the problem of the foreign hostages in Lebanon was touched on in the U.S.-Syrian talks. Let us recall that 13 people—citizens of various Western states seized by Lebanese extremist groupings at various times—remain captive to this day. Syria, as its representatives have repeatedly declared, has recently been doing everything to gain freedom for these people as quickly as possible. The need to continue these efforts was discussed during the talks in Damascus.

Of course, the U.S.-Syrian consultations did not overlook the postwar situation in the Persian Gulf region either. In particular, the sides exchanged ideas concerning the future of this region and ways to maintain peace and stability there. In this connection the Damascus declaration recently adopted by eight Arab states, containing these countries' proposals for creating a new system of regional security, was a subject of discussion.

As observers close to the delegations point out, both sides are satisfied, on the whole, with the consultations that took place. It has been announced that the U.S.-Syrian dialogue on the most important problems of mutual interest will be continued.

Before flying to Moscow from Damascus, J. Baker met with Lebanese Foreign Minister F. Buwayz, who had come to the Syrian capital from Beirut specially for this.

So, the first Near East tour by the U.S. secretary of state since the war in the Persian Gulf is over. U.S. diplomacy has made one more attempt to revive the process of a peace settlement in the Near East and, as far as possible, to bring the positions of Arab states and Israel closer together. The future will show whether these efforts will yield any concrete results....

U.S. Said 'Misinterpreting' Gulf Initiatives

LD1703101991 Moscow World Service in English 0000 GMT 17 Mar 91

["Moscow Viewpoint" commentary by Valentin Zorin]

[Text] Now that the Gulf war has ended, some people are attempting to revive in the Americans the feeling of suspicion in relation to the Soviet Union's policy. They are misinterpreting Moscow's initiatives that were aimed at preventing the final stage of the crisis, the ground war. These initiatives are posed as a double game played by Soviet diplomats and a desire to deprive the United States of the fruits of its victory and consolidate the Soviet Union's positions in the Middle East. But let us recall, however, the background against which the Soviet initiatives came into being.

American newspapers wrote at the time about possible deaths of tens of thousands of American servicemen in the ground war. No one expected Saddam Husayn's armed forces would waver after the very first attacks of the multinational forces. The aim of the Soviet proposals was not to save Saddam Husayn, as some American political analysts claim, but to prevent the bloodshed, the loss of human lives, including American lives. I qualify as improper actions of those who are trying not to misinterpret Moscow's desire to make Iraq abide by the United Nations resolution without risking human lives. In fact, they keep silent about another important factor. All the steps taken by the Soviet leadership at the time were coordinated with the American President. This factor is of major significance. Contacts between the White House and the Kremlin had never been as close and regular as they were on the eve of the ground war. There were long telephone conversations between Moscow, Washington, London, Paris, and Bonn. Politicians had to be provided with an opportunity to use all their chances before the military could take the matter into their hands. Finally, it should be remembered that when President Bush eventually decided on the ground offensive Moscow did nothing to interfere with this decision. So what we deal with is not a double game but a frank and honest policy that is perfectly in line with the new type of relations developed between the two countries.

Now that the war against the aggressor has been won, there is the need to win peace as well. Here the political capital gained by the Soviet Union, the United States,

and other countries, members of the joint coalition formed at the United Nations Organization to hold back the aggressor, could prove to be useful. The impression is that the American Administration was aware of the real purpose of the initiatives put forward by Mikhail Gorbachev with the intention to avoid losses. This follows in particular from a recent statement by the American Secretary of State James Baker, who reaffirmed that the Soviet Union's postion during the Gulf crisis was a major contribution to the work of restoring international justice.

China

Reports Continue on Maslyukov Visit to China

Meets With Chinese Premier

OW1503190191 Moscow International Service in Mandarin 1000 GMT 15 Mar 91

[Report by correspondent Klimov in Beijing; from the "Current Events and Commentaries" program]

[Text] The Soviet Government delegation headed by Deputy Premier Maslyukov is continuing his visit to China. During the visit, the two sides discussed economic and trade issues within the framework of the Soviet-Chinese Joint Cooperation Committee. On this, our station correspondent Klimov filed the following report:

During Chinese Premier Li Peng's meeting with the Soviet delegation head, the two sides explored ways for promoting mutually beneficial cooperation under the new situation. In recent years, China has become a major trading partner of the Soviet Union. Li Peng expressed the belief that the Soviet Union can stabilize the situation and accelerate its economic development.

Due to the strains on consumer markets, the Soviet Union has a keen interest in Chinese commodities. China can provide timely supply of quality commodities and, at the same time, is interested in purchasing Soviet commodities, raw materials, and industrial technology. Scientific and technological knowledge developed by the Soviet Union can become a new form of bilateral cooperation. There are great potentials for cooperation between scientific research institutes and production units.

During the meeting, the two sides also discussed a $730 million Chinese loan to the Soviet Union. In return, the Soviet Union will help China build power plants and supply it with machinery and raw materials. China will provide the Soviet Union with grain, meat products, tea, tobacco, textiles, and other consumer goods.

In an interview with reporters Masylukov said: The Chinese side took a positive stand during the talks. It should be pointed out that the continuous growth of bilateral cooperation is inseparable from the normalization of relations between the two countries and the two parties. The visit to the Soviet Union by Jiang Zemin, general secretary of the CPC Central Committee, in May 1991 will contribute further to improving bilateral relations.

Maslyukov Interviewed

OW1703213491 Moscow International Service in Mandarin 2200 GMT 15 Mar 91

[Report on an interview with Yuriy Maslyukov, Soviet deputy prime minister, by correspondent V. Kulikov in Beijing; date not given]

[Text] Soviet Deputy Prime Minister Yuriy Maslyukov and Chinese Vice Premier Tian Jiyun, who are cochairmen of the Soviet-Chinese Joint Economic Commission signed an agreement at the Great Hall of the People in Beijing on 15 March. The agreement stipulated that China would provide a loan to the Soviet Union.

Our correspondent V. Kulikov interviewed Yuriy Maslyukov, head of the Soviet Government delegation in Beijing.

Kulikov asked: What are the terms and conditions in the agreement?

Maslyukov responded: The Chinese Government decided to supply a loan to the Soviet Union beginning 1991. It will provide food and everyday commodities worth 1 billion Swiss francs to the Soviet Union. It is equivalent to $800 million. The agreement has specified the commodities to be supplied in 1991 and the terms of payment are very favorable. Some may say that the amount of the loan itself is not very large, and that its impact may be limited on the Soviet economic conditions. We feel that this is a friendly gesture, and that there is hope for our relations because it is a helping hand extended to us in our difficult times. We have considered a situation: The basis of the loan is commodities, which is just what we need this year.

Maslyukov continued: I feel that the supply of the loan will make a great impact on our bilateral relations.

On the overall economic cooperation between the Soviet Union and China, the head of the Soviet Government delegation said: Perhaps, the more I have studied the Chinese economy, science and technology, the more I have realized that we have missed much because issues of bilateral cooperation were not solved promptly. As time goes by, I am more convinced that in order to improve bilateral cooperation, we should strive to understand our partners' economy and laws, and consider increasing bilateral exchanges. I would like to point out: All my visits to China and meetings with the Chinese associates have further convinced me that this type of cooperation is both necessary and possible.

Visit Ends 16 Mar

LD1603105791 Moscow TASS in English 0735 GMT 16 Mar 91

[By TASS correspondent Vladimir Kashirov]

[Text] Beijing March 16 TASS—Successfully completing a week-long visit to China, the Soviet Government delegation led by Deputy Prime Minister Yuriy Maslyukov departed for home today.

Maslyukov, who heads the Soviet part of the joint Soviet-Chinese commission on economic, trade, scientific and technical cooperation, repeatedly visited China and conducted talks and business meetings with the Chinese leaders on broader cooperation between the two major socialist states in the economy, trade, science and technology.

Sharing his impressions with TASS on the present visit, Maslyukov said: "The more I study China's possibilities in economic, scientific and technical development, the more I become convinced that we are losing much due to inefficiency in settling issues of bilateral cooperation.

"The Soviet Union also has great potentialities, but we, regrettably, poorly know the economy, legislation and mutual relations, that is what our two countries need to establish mutually advantageous cooperation.

"Each visit by our delegation to China and each meeting with Chinese comrades strengthen our confidence that such cooperation is possible and vitally necessary for the USSR and China and for the Soviet and Chinese peoples."

Rogachev Interviewed on Talks in Beijing

LD1803110291 Moscow All-Union Radio Mayak Network in Russian 0830 GMT 18 Mar 91

[Interview with Igor Rogachev, USSR deputy minister of foreign affairs, by correspondent Albert Papayan in Beijing, date not given—recorded]

[Text] The talks on reduction of arms and armed forces along the Soviet-Chinese border are important not only for bilateral relations. They are the foundation for what is to begin very soon on the scale of the entire Asian-Pacific region, said Igor Rogachev, USSR deputy minister of foreign affairs—who is staying in Beijing as part of a Soviet Government delegation—in an interview with Soviet Radio. This is what our correspondent Albert Papayan reports from Beijing:

[Papayan] During the consultations with the leaders of the Foreign Ministry of the People's Republic of China, specific issues concerning the preparation of the Soviet-Chinese summit meeting, to be held in Moscow in May this year, are under discussion. A schedule for further border talks between the two countries has also been drawn up. Igor Rogachev and Tian Zengpei, deputy foreign minister of the People's Republic of China, exchanged views on the situation in the Persian Gulf and on the post-crisis order in the region, and also on the situation on the Korean peninsula.

A great deal of attention was paid to the Cambodian problem—moreover because it is precisely now that intensive talks and consultations have been held in Beijing between various sides involved in the Cambodian knot. What are the prospects for a settlement of the Cambodian problem? What is the USSR's position? I have asked the deputy foreign minister to answer these questions. Igor Rogachev is at our microphone.

[Rogachev] Special attention was paid to the prospects of a Cambodian settlement in light of the fact that five permanent members of the Security Council—including, of course, China and the USSR—recently elaborated a framework for a draft agreement on Cambodia. We are planning great hopes on the continuation of talks between Beijing and Hanoi. We believe it very important tht the talks between the United States and the Pyongyang government continue. This will serve directly as a final part in preparations for the convening of a Paris conference, to be held at the level of foreign ministers—and then we could finally sign a final act and final agreement on a comprehensive political solution in Cambodia.

Northeast Asia

Reports Continue on Kuril Dispute With Japan

Kaifu Seeks Resolution

PM1803151191 Moscow IZVESTIYA in Russian 14 Mar 91 Union Edition p 1

[Item from roundup of IZVESTIYA, TASS, BALTFAX, URAL-INFORM, POSTFAKTUM, INTERFAX, REUTER, UPI reports: "Soviet-Japanese Relations"]

[Text] In an interview with NHK-TV, Japanese Prime Minister Kaifu stated: "Japan and the USSR are neighboring countries and therefore they must establish relations based on genuine friendship and trust. I would like the visit by the Soviet president to be a starting point for genuinely friendly relations by our resolving the problem of 'the northern territories' and concluding a peaceful settlement to assist in achieving a breakthrough in the cardinal qualitative improvement of bilateral relations.

"I believe that the direction of perestroyka is correct and I want it to be definitely crowned with success. At the same time, there are complexities and problems and the use of force in relations with the republics in particular is causing alarm. We advocate resolving internal political problems by peaceful, democratic means."

Kaifu advocated broad financial and economic cooperation with the USSR, since this will assist in "improving relations with a neighboring country and ensuring genuine peace and prosperity in the Asian-Pacific region,

and will thus meet Japan's interests." The prime minister stressed, "any unprincipled separation of politics and economics is impossible. During M.S. Gorbachev's visit I intend to resolutely call on him to adopt bold decisions on the problem of 'the northern territories.'"

Islanders Oppose Change in Status

LD1803120491 Moscow Radio Rossii Network in Russian 1100 GMT 18 Mar 91

[Text] In addition to the questions that are the subject of the two referenda, the inhabitants of the Kuril Islands have been expressing their views on another very important problem—the idea of returning the Kurils to Japan. Tokyo, in particular, regards this as an indispensable condition for a radical improvement in Soviet-Japanese relations and the signing of a peace treaty between the two countries. The answer to this question is all the more important in that only a month or so remains before President Gorbachev's visit to Japan.

The majority of the Kuril islanders say they will leave these territories if their present official status is changed. Claims that Moscow is seriously considering the question of returning the northern territories have been appearing more frequently in the Japanese press in recent weeks. Soviet representatives deny that such plans exist.

Southeast Asia & Pacific

Reports View Cambodian Cease-Fire Prospects

Hun Sen Sets Cease-Fire Terms

PM1503102191 Moscow IZVESTIYA in Russian 9 Mar 91 Union Edition p 1

[Report from IZVESTIYA, TASS, POSTFACTUM, REUTER, UPI roundup: "Hun Sen on Cease-Fire"]

[Text] Cambodian Prime Minister Hun Sen addressed a rally in Phnom Penh Thursday, stating his readiness to agree to an immediate cease-fire with groupings in opposition to the incumbent government on conditions stipulated by it. These conditions being as follows. Foreign countries cease all shipments to the opposition and provide the requisite conditions for refugees. In turn Phnom Penh renounces Vietnamese military aid and stops combat operations against opposition groupings. Hun Sen also urged the United Nations to facilitate the speediest holding of elections in Cambodia.

Arms Deliveries End Supported

BK1403054891 Moscow International Service in Vietnamese 1200 GMT 13 Mar 91

[Text] The Soviet Union supports efforts to stop supplying weapons to all warring factions in Cambodia. This was mentioned in Soviet Foreign Minister Aleksandr Bessmertnykh's recent letter to his Vietnamse counterpart Nguyen Co Thach.

The letter asserts that the Soviet Union supports all proposals aimed at restoring real peace in Cambodia.

Namibian Model Considered

BK1603091791 Moscow in Cambodian to Cambodia 1230 GMT 15 Mar 91

[Text] Military operations continue in Cambodia. Warring parties use tanks, rockets, and artillery. The sounds of fighting resound in all cities of the region, Hanoi and Vientiane, Beijing and Tokyo, and in the ASEAN countries. According to reports we have received, in the past week alone, leading circles expressed great concerns over changes in the Cambodian situation. Is the process to normalize the situation in Cambodia deadlocked or is there still hope that positive changes will take place? We would like to give the microphone to our commentator Comrade (Aleksey Kondrachev).

Everyone knows that there is despair only when there is no life. On the Cambodian issue, there is no basis for talking about despair, writes our commentator. Confirming this assessment is the attitude of many countries which have not only have expressed concern over the current situation in Cambodia but have also put forward various proposals to maintain the present situation. For example, the spokesman of the PRC Foreign Ministry proposed the convening of the Paris conference on Cambodia as quickly as possible and the meeting of the rebel tripartite Cambodian side in Beijing. Those attending this meeting reaffirmed their attitude of considering the UN Cambodian plan as the best solution to the problem. Therefore, only Phnom Penh opposes some points of this plan. Why does Phnom Penh oppose some points in this plan?

Cambodian leaders contend that the UN plan has not really discussed the prevention of the Pol Pot regime's return to power. Phnom Penh doubts the effectiveness of the supervision over the disarming of opposing parties because the other groups can adopt guerrilla tactics. Phnom Penh opposes UN control over a number of ministries in the current government which, according to Phnom Penh, means that the current administration would be disrobed of power even before the general election. Can a so-called definitive compromised formula be found to solve this problem? I think this formula has been found as it was used in normalizing the situation in Namibia, where the United Nations limited its task to only organizing and implementing elections while leaving daily tasks to the existing administration, which at that time was under the Republic of South Africa. In my view, some changes can be made to the UN plan on Cambodia to please all Cambodian sides.

In a word, in order to achieve a compromise, talks should be held and new initiatives put forward. Comrade Vitaliy Churkin, representative of the Soviet Foreign Ministry, has revealed the Soviet stance on normalizing the situation in Cambodia. Expressing regret over the

fact that lately the process to normalize the situation in Cambodia has considerably slowed down, Comrade Churkin said:

[Begin Churkin recording in (?Russian) superseded by Cambodian translation] Restarting requires change and addition in (?strategies) and new efforts deployed by the Cambodian parties themselves and all states involved in this issue. In our view, this is also important to make the peace initiatives go hand in hand with the draft plan of the five permanent members of the UN Security Council. [end recording]

Japanese Proposal Examined

BK1703093991 Moscow in Cambodian to Cambodia 1230 GMT 16 Mar 91

[Commentary by (Igor Karavayev)]

[Text] The visit to Beijing by Tadashi Ikeda, adviser to the Japanese Embassy in Thailand, made observers pay special attention. Our observer, Comrade (Igor Karavayev), writes the following.

By all accounts, the objective of the Japanese diplomat's mission was to determine preliminary reactions to Tokyo's proposal on solving the Cambodian problem. The Japanese proposal has not yet been fully disclosed, but judging from the statement of the Japanese Foreign Ministry's representative, it supplements the draft worked out by the five permanent members of the UN Security Council.

As everyone knows, the UN plan has still not been put into effect because of differences of opinion between Cambodian parties over a number of aspects of a solution. The Japanese proposal presumably deals with some ways to make mutual concessions. Tokyo has already sent its plan to both the opposing Cambodian side and Phnom Penh. The Japanese Foreign Ministry has not disclosed the essence of its plan. Judging from statements in Tokyo, this plan adds to various UN efforts aimed at ending the civil war in Cambodia. It is estimated that if this plan could be achieved, it would help prevent the Khmer Rouge's return to power. It is expected that the essence of the Japanese plan for solving the Cambodian problem will be clearly publicized in April or May because at that time Japanese Foreign Minister Taro Nakayama plans to visit Beijing and Hanoi. Until then, presumably only countries involved in a solution to the Cambodian problem and other involved parties can read Tokyo's proposal.

In observers' view, Japan can now fill the role of intermediary between Cambodian parties involved in the conflict. This role had been played by Thailand before the military coup d'etat there, but has been basically left vacant since the coup. The reason for pushing observers to take this view is that lately Japanese diplomats have managed to establish lasting relations with the opposing Cambodian side as well as with Phnom Penh.

There is another circumstance, no less important, that has prodded Japan to be active in its efforts to solve the Cambodian problem. Based on circumstances and foresight—which are Japan's characteristics—circles in Tokyo have already been talking about the benefits Japan, a giant economic power, would reap from contributing to restoring Cambodia after the war. This was confirmed a few days ago by an influential Japanese newspaper (YOMIURI). Citing official sources, (YOMIURI) reports that the government has decided to propose Tokyo as the venue for meetings of all involved parties at the ministerial level to discuss cooperation in the cause of restoring Cambodia's economy after peace has been restored there.

Near East & South Asia

Postwar Reports on Mideast, Gulf Continue

Churkin Statement on Mideast

LD1603203991 Moscow TASS International Service in Russian 1820 GMT 16 Mar 91

[Text] Moscow 16 Mar (TASS)—Speaking at a briefing held here today, Vitaliy Churkin, head of the USSR Foreign Ministry Information Directorate, delivered some thoughts on the bases for the postcrisis structure in the Persian Gulf, as set out by the Soviet side in the course of the talks held in Moscow with U.S. Secretary of State James Baker. There follows the text of the speech delivered by the Soviet diplomat:

"The Kuwait crisis and the way in which it was overcome have provided a test of durability for the new way of thinking. The world community, by coming through this test, has demonstrated that quite a distance has already been covered along the path from the 'cold war' to a new system of international relations.

To secure the success that has been scored, we need to maintain a high degree of interaction and cooperation in this postcrisis period as we tackle the problems spawned by the conflict in the Persian Gulf zone.

A stable normalization in the Persian Gulf could have a positive effect so far as improving the health of the climate throughout the Near East is concerned, and could contribute toward resolving the problems engendered by the long-standing Arab-Israeli conflict.

The Soviet Union is watching carefully the ideas for the postcrisis structure in the Gulf that are being put forward at the present time. Many of the initiatives in this respect contain approaches that either coincide with, or echo, our own.

We visualize the provision of security in the postcrisis period as being effected by taking practical measures along the following main lines:

1. The key role in defining the parameters of the postcrisis settlement in the Persian Gulf zone undoubtedly

belongs, first and foremost, to the states which are situated in the region. It is for them to determine where the balance of their rights and interests lies—the balance that will allow them to establish long-term, broad political and other cooperation. We should not, however, think in terms of creating enclosed bloc-type groupings which would isolate themselves from other countries. That would lead to the emergence of new antagonisms and a fueling of old ones. The postcrisis settlement must not be directed against anyone. On the contrary, it must promote the interaction of all countries connected to the region, as well as the interaction of the states that do not directly belong to it but make an important contribution to sustaining peace and stability there.

It is important that the basic principles of international law should form the foundation of the future accords between the sides concerned, specifically, noninterference in each other's internal affairs, non-use of force or the threat of force, settlement of disputes by peaceful means, recognition of the rights of all the states in the region to sovereignty and territorial integrity within the framework of internationally recognized existing borders.

A multilateral, all-embracing agreement or bilateral agreements which would meet the clauses in Chapter VIII of the UN Charter and which would be supported by corresponding international guarantees by the Security Council and its five permanent members would be the optimal choice.

2. The lessons of the Kuwait crisis demand that consistent steps should be taken in the limitation of the arms race in the region. Despite all the complexities in this process, the promotion of the task of maintaining the balance of forces at ever lower levels of armament, even down to the level of defense sufficiency, is now justified.

Most acute is the issue of placing an effective barrier on the path of the spread of nuclear, chemical, and other types of weapons of mass destruction in the region. Proposals on creating a zone in the Near East which would be free from these types of weapons and that all Near East countries join the treaty on the nonproliferation of nuclear weapons, as well as the convention on the banning of chemical weapons, deserve serious attention. It is necessary to make a serious examination of the issue of a balanced reduction in supplies of weapons to the region. In this matter, a responsible approach is needed both on the part of the main suppliers of weapons as well as their purchasers. First and foremost, it is a question of displaying restraint with respect to the supplying and acquiring of offensive types of armaments, especially missiles and missile technology. The achievement of the relevant collective accords, including monitoring mechanisms, is needed to find optimal solutions to this problem.

It would be beneficial to make use of the experience of other regions in respect to the implementation of confidence-building measures, such as the announcement of military maneuvers, the invitation of observers, the setting up of demilitarized zones and zones with lower concentrations of weapons.

3. The foreign military presence should not exceed those levels that were in the region on 1 August 1990. If military support from without is needed for a certain amount of time, then UN peacekeeping forces could play a part here, or UN observers, or both, together with the involvement of the relevant contingents from Arab, Muslim and other countries.

4. The task arises of getting all-round economic cooperation going among the countries in the region—first and foremost for the postwar restoration of the shattered economies. It is necessary to develop international cooperation in eliminating the damage caused to the environment by military operations. Without casting doubt on the soundness of the principle of sovereignty of countries over their natural resources, it is important to regard in a new light the task of imparting greater socioeconomic stability to the region at the expense of gradual levelling out and harmonization of the economic development of the countries located there.

5. A broad consensus, which also includes countries in the region, is developing on the need to give the United Nations important duties in providing external support for the postcrisis settlement in the Persian Gulf area. This also stems logically from the role which the Security Council played in organizing the collective rebuff to Iraqi aggression and also from the council's Resolution 598.

First and foremost the United Nations could act as a reliable guarantor for compliance with the accords. Our proposal for the creation—in the event of a threat arising, in one form or another, to shipping in the Persian Gulf zone—of naval forces sailing under the UN flag, remains relevant. The new level of trust between the permanent members of the Security Council justifies resumption of a thorough discussion on reactivating the UN's Military Staff Committee in crisis situations.

6. The task of easing military tension in the subregion of the Persian Gulf and in the Near East as a whole requires purposeful efforts for removing the political causes of the instability and conflicts here.

A unanimous attitude on the part of the international community in favor of a rapid and radical improvement in the situation in the region, where the interests of a wide range of states are interwoven, creates more favorable conditions for immediately taking up the problem of settling the Arab-Israeli conflict. The success of efforts in this area will make it possible to incorporate the system of security being created in the zone of the Persian Gulf into broader regional structures. The security of the peoples of the Near and Middle East will certainly gain from this.

We are aware of the fact that the creation of a regionwide system of security is not a one-shot deal but, rather, a

process for the establishment of security, which will take time. The most rapid implementation of at least the first steps for achieving progress in those areas where success can be realistically counted on is all the more necessary.

In voicing these thoughts, we are by no means claiming to possess truth in the highest degree. The elaboration of a new quality of interstate relations in the region will require intensive political and diplomatic efforts with the participation of the broadest range of interested countries. The Soviet Union is prepared to make its contribution with a view to making the most rapid progress toward resolving the problems of the postcrisis arrangement in the Persian Gulf region, toward discussing any constructive ideas, and toward active cooperation with all interested parties: the states of the Persian Gulf, other Arab and Muslim countries, the permanent members of the Security Council, and the West European and nonaligned countries."

Regional Ramifications Noted

LD1803000191 Moscow Radio Peace and Progress in Arabic 1400 GMT 17 Mar 91

[Excerpts] The Arab Gulf region has recently witnessed major developments, particularly in the wake of the land offensive against Kuwait and Iraq, the withdrawal of the Iraqi forces from Kuwait, and the penetration of the American and European forces into Iraq.

These latest developments have come to prove to the world that the liberation of Kuwait was not the real and principal war objective of the U.S. Administration. The U.S. Administration found in the crisis an opportunity for large scale reorganization in the oil-rich Gulf region, exploiting in this respect the Soviet withdrawal and the absence of any serious rivalry for American military might in the world as a whole. Thus the biggest participant in this war was the U.S. war machine, with the other powers playing only a token role, of political more than military value. [passage omitted]

It may be asserted that conditions after the war can never be the same as before. I believe that this probably is the only absolute fact at present. In turn, it affects another fact; namely, that the formulation of the present and future of the region for a considerable time to come will depend on the result of the war. This more precisely affects the question of security and stability in this explosive part of the world, which is of vital importance to the world's security and stability in the coming stage of its development. [passage omitted]

The question of stability and security has not been and is not being raised in its narrow sense, confined to the military field, but in its comprehensive and wide sense which extends to all the regional, national, and international aspects as well as to all the political, economic, food supply, and environmental fields, in addition to the military security field.

From all this, we can conclude that the Gulf war was not only a test for the Arab nationalist security order, which was talked about extensively before the Gulf war, but also a test of the new international order and the regional security orders being formulated, particulrly in the aftermath of the collapse of the system in which the world was dominated by two poles—the USSR and the United States—and growing aspirations for creation of a multipolar world. [passage omitted]

Through this war, the United States sought to deter and discipline the entire Third World and make anyone with mineral, petroleum, or agricultural wealth or a strategic waterway learn a lesson from the fate of Iraq, should it contemplate pursuing an independent policy not to the liking of the United States or considered by it as an act of disobedience of its orders or a departure from the course of its general plan for the protection of its interests in the world. [passage omitted]

The United States is now trying to consolidate its strategic hegemony over the Gulf region and the Middle East and entrench Israel's position in the region. In the American view, Israel alone has the right to possess a strong army, sophisticated weapons, and unconventional military technology as well as nuclear, biological, and chemical weapons, so that its military might will constantly be superior to the combined strength of the countries neighboring it.

In the American view, the possession by any of the countries neighboring Israel of sophisticated weapons and unconventional technology constitutes a threat to peace and security and necessitates punishment by an all-out destruction of infrastructures and by a war of annihilation against the peoples of these countries.

Israel is the accredited and authorized guardian of American interests in the region and on it lies the responsibility for disciplining any Arab country that shows any sign of departing from American interests or opposing them.

Israel has the right to occupy the Palestinian land, repress the Palestinian people, and usurp their legitimate national rights. The United States and the whole world reward it for that with loans and grants and political and diplomatic protection. No Arab country, whichever it may be, has the right to help the valiant Palestinian intifadah or develop its capabilities to attain a state of balance with Israel for the sake of reaching a just settlement for the problems of the region, including the problem of the Palestinian people. For this reason, it is not by accident that Washington is the principal advocate of the new international order and of a new regional order in the Middle East.

Having triumphed in the cold war with the USSR or forced it to make unjust concessions to itself thanks to former Soviet Foreign Minister Eduard Shevardnadze, the United States forced the USSR to withdraw to attend

its internal affairs while the United States and its allies dominated its needs for finance, investment, and modern technology.

With Germany's preoccupation with the problems of unity and the containment of unity's negative aspects, particularly in regard to the resolving of the economic problems of East Germany, Washington exploited the Gulf crisis to complete the circuit of its domination of the leadership of the capitalist world through its domination of the Arab region with its great strategic importance not only to Western Europe and Japan but also to the whole world.

As it has succeeded in the current transient stage in consolidating its leadership of the capitalist world in the field of East-West relations, the United States is trying to consolidate it in the field of North-South relations, so that it may become the only pole dominating the whole world.

In my opinion, America's success in dominating the oil of the Middle East and its petrodollars, markets, and strategically important position to the world, as well as its political system and international relations, constitutes a decisive factor in this field.

Recently, particularly after the end of the Gulf war, the U.S. Administration began to declare openly that it wants to remove all the obstacles that stand in the way of the new imperialist order which it wants to consolidate and impose on the world countries. For this reason, we see it these days feverishly urging a Middle East regional security order under the pretext of security and stability which meets with welcome on the international and regional levels.

As to France, Britain, and Germany, they have followed this line hoping to gain a role in the post-war arrangements. Other countries from inside and outside the region and from those who had direct or indirect connection with the war rushed to act also so that they might have a say in this regard. This is evident from the Israeli, Iranian, Turkish, Pakistani, and Soviet moves.

What is striking is the fact that the Washington alliance talks about the postwar era as though it has a guarantee of final victory. The U.S. Administration and its allies are now propagating this in order to preserve the cohesion of this alliance, on the one hand, and to bolster their psychological warfare, on the other. It tries to give the impression that its will is triumphant and that anyone who wants to have a role in the region must yield to this will.

Washington and its allies want to mislead world public opinion by giving the impression that they are the ones concerned for security and peace in the region, while actually hiding their true sinister intentions which are clearly evident in the plans being drawn up for the security of the region and the postwar arrangements. Irrespective of the formulas announced by the various parties to the alliance, there are numerous common elements among them: the safeguarding of the interests of Washington and its allies in the region and particularly where oil is concerned; the establishment of a permanent military force to protect the oil fields and supply routes, defend the Gulf countries, guarantee Israel's security, and prevent any future threat to it in the Arab region; the participation of Iran, Turkey, and Pakistan in the security arrangements in order to safeguard the elements of regional balance and deterrence; the peaceful solution of the Arab-Israeli conflict in accordance with American wishes, are removal of total and mass destruction weapons, including chemical weapons, from the hands of the regional countries, but, of course, with the exception of Israel.

In my opinion, the elements of this plan cancel the need for a comprehensive Arab security order and replace it with a Middle East stategic security order, designed to preserve the apparatus of American domination of the Arab region through the entrenchment of inter-Arab division, on the one hand, and the breaking of links among the causes of the Arab nation, on the other.

The United States wants to be the master and have the last word in the matter of security and stability. In order to achieve this, it seeks to break the links among the various Arab causes and to do away with the causes of pan-Arab security as a whole, and thus close the door to any possible Arab integration or any possible political use of Arab capablilities. It also wants to achieve this to deter any attempts at resort to military option against Israel.

In spite of the references to the need to solve the Arab-Zionist conflict and the resolution of the Palestine question or the guaranteeing of the rights of the Palestinians, it is clear that Washington wants to place the Arab-Israeli conflict on the margin and to rule out any role by the PLO in the coming solution. All this in order to enable itself and Israel to dictate their conditions for the solution and force the Arabs themselves to offer concession after concession on the pretext of regional peace and security and stability. [passage omitted]

In my opinion, the actual effects of this war will only become clear after many months have passed. Whatever the direct results of the war, which are not clear yet, its long-term consequences will not be confined to the area of the battle nor to the Arab area alone. The battle for the defense of the Palestinian cause and the national legitimate rights of the Palestinian people continues while America's ally in the region continues to plot against them and try to obliterate them and prevent the realization of their arms.

Considered Priority Issue

LD1703230291 Moscow All-Union Radio First Program Radio-1 Network in Russian 1230 GMT 17 Mar 91

["The World This Week: International Review" program with TASS political correspondents Aleksandr

Nikolayevich Antsiferov, Yuriy Konstantinovich Tyssovskiy, and All-Union Radio commentator Yevgeniy Tikhonovich Grachev]

[Excerpts] [Grachev] Hello comrades! The events of the past few days in international life have, in one way or another, developed around the situation in the Persian Gulf. Despite the fact that the war there has ended, international politics and the actions of foreign political leaders has been aimed at dealing with the postwar structure in the region. The meetings and conversations in Moscow which took place last week were especially devoted to this topic. I mean the visit by U.S. Secretary of State James Baker, and his conversations with his Soviet colleague Bessmertnykh, USSR minister of foreign affairs, and his meetings and conversations with President of the USSR Mikhail Sergeyevich Gorbachev. For the immediate future, the topic of the Persian Gulf, and the topic of the Near East, will remain a priority topic in Soviet-U.S. relations.

Our meeting today at the roundtable is devoted in one way or another to the development of the situation in the area of the Persian Gulf. Historians and politicians will probably analyze for a long time yet the events which preceded the outbreak of the war, and will analyze the course of military actions themselves. I think that very serious research still lies ahead. All of that is, of course, of interest and will be of interest. But now I would like to talk about what is happening today, about how events are developing, about what peace in the region will be like. All these discussions may seem subjective, but let us take the facts now, and only the facts.

[Tyssovskiy] It seems to me that the development of events in the region has three components which, although they are linked on the whole, should nonetheless be singled out and perhaps even examined to a certain extent separately, because it is obviously a question of consequences which may already influence the structure of states which have taken part directly in the conflict in the capacity of aggressor and the victim of aggression, let us say, Iraq and Kuwait. Apart from that, it is indisputable that the results of that war will have consequences for the region, and for coalition states which directly border upon and which directly took part in the military actions. Apart from everything else, in my view it is indisputable that this conflict—and the defeat of Iraq in that war—will have consequences for the entire Near East region as a whole.

[Antsiferov] That is to say, the whole knot of problems, those contradictions which have long come to a head, and which have accumulated perhaps not even over years but over decades, even over the centuries, is here.

[Tyssovskiy] It seems to me that it necessary, all the same, to begin namely with Iraq because, strange though it may be, after the end of the war Iraq will nonetheless remain the hottest spot in the region. As you know, after the most rapid victory of the allies in the so-called 100-hour war....

[Grachev, interrupting] What is meant by 100 hours, Yuriy Konstantinovich?

[Tyssovskiy] One hundred hours—that is from the start of the ground military actions. After the 100-hour war, Iraq was, so to speak, done for. It can be clearly stated that a civil war between three major population groups is underway on its territory now. The first are the Sunnis who occupy the central part of Iraq and who, in principle, support Saddam Husayn and the whole structure of his power. There are the Shi'ites in the south of Iraq, who traditionally were subordinate to the Sunnis and who naturally want to change the situation in their favor. The third area is extremely explosive—this is the north of Iraq where Kurdish rebels, and, on the whole the entire Kurdish population, are acting against the Iraqi Army. Therefore, the future of Iraq is at stake. What will it be like when it emerges from these most difficult internal ups and downs? It is difficult to say anything. Reports on the victory of the rebels are succeeded by reports of their rout. It is extremely difficult to confirm all these data.

Just one thing is clear—that so far, I think the initiative is still in the hands of the rebels. Their representatives assembled in Beirut in order to discuss the future structure of Iraq after the Saddam era. Some points of contact were defined. But in view of the fact that the opposition is extremely ill-assorted, I think that it will be difficult for them to arrive at some kind of definite basis in order to engage in the construction of the country. So far they are united by just one thing—hatred for the regime of the Ba'ath party, hatred for the regime of Saddam Husayn, and for the regime of personal power.

[Grachev] But, at the same time, after all, Iraq is not isolated now. There is a large Arab world around it. There is great concern over what is happening in Iraq, and it is possible that perhaps in this situation, too, the Arab factor will begin to function somehow, albeit with some delay. Or do you think that is the internal affair of Iraq?

[Antsiferov] I have formed the opinion that not just Arabs, but the West, too, have decided to wait and see and, so to speak, what to do with what arises as a result. Of course, the United States and Saudi Arabia, and a whole number of other Arab countries who may be added to that, very much do not want power to remain with Saddam Husayn. On the other hand, what is the alternative? That question is of great concern to Washington, Riyadh, Cairo, and a whole number of other capitals, including Western ones. Indeed, if Shi'ite rebels come to power in the south of Iraq, a great many fear that they will simply be pawns in the hands of Shi'ite Iran, and will carry out a policy which is favorable to Tehran. So it is a very complex situation, and I personally do not see a way out of it in the near future.

[Tyssovskiy] It seems to me that if one is to speak of some factor in the present situation, then it is not the Arab factor but the U.S. factor—let us put it like that.

After all, one should not forget that although the war has ended, U.S. troops are still on the territory of Iraq, and although they are not intervening in the civil war, they remain there nevertheless as a factor which must be taken into account. After all, it is no coincidence that General Schwarzkopf, commander of the troops, warned Iraq against buzzing from the air the rebels in those regions which are directly adjacent to sites where U.S. Armed Forces and the allied forces are deployed. I mean....

[Grachev] Moreover, Aleksandr Nikolayevich, the United States has after all made it quite clear that if Saddam Husayn dares to have recourse to the use of chemical weapons against the rebels, [words indistinct] there are already such unconfirmed statements, the U.S. Air Force will assume the right to bomb areas and units using such weapons.

[Antsiferov] Well, I would to draw attention to that circumstance. As a result of the war the United States, in the first place, is leaving its troops there and the factor of its presence has been implemented to the full. Second, ther are, nonetheless, some kind of conditions on the part of the United States and some kind of, well, adjustments are under way in the development of the situation in the region. Therefore, many foreign political observers are now expressing fears that if events continue to develop along such lines, then new models may appear in the region—and not just in the region—of a unipolar world—as specialists and politologists are wont to call it—a unipolar world with the dictate of a hyper power. Naturally, the United States aspires to that role now. It seems to me that the danger is arising of a unipolar world appearing, if I correctly understand the development of events.

[Tyssovskiy] I would not dramatize that danger, although the likelihood of such a development of events exists in my view. It should not be discounted. Indisputably, the United States is the domineering state at the present time, I mean as far as moral authority and factors such as military strength are concerned. It is another matter that it took part in the military actions, prosecuted military actions at the UN's mandate. It seems to me that the United States, in any event, will need partners in that region, partners in regulating the complex proceses which are underway there now. After all, we were speaking just now of Iraq, but I would like to draw your attention to the state which was saved. I mean Kuwait itself. Now that the first euphoria of victory has passed, that state has now come up against extremely acute problems which may not even be withinthe powers of that state to resolve by itself. After all, it is not a question just of it having been pillaged during the occupation by Iraq. It is also a quetion of a gigantic ecological disaster. In the end, it is a question of deep advances having been made in the social situation in Kuwait itself. I mean the situation in society.

[Antsiferov] It seems that things are getting back to normal there. The amir has now returned to Kuwait. He was greeted by society far from unequivocally, so to speak, because since the war, forces in favor of the democratization of society have become appreciably more active. As is known, Kuwait is a monarchy, moreover a monarchy with rather strict legal structures, and absolute monarchy.

[Tyssovskiy] I would like to draw attention to the fact that the world community still has to lend considrable assistance to Kuwait in solving its problems. After all, if one takes account of the fact that the main source of income to the treasury was from oil, then now that the oil industry has been destroyed, that oil wells have been blown up, and that the ecological situation remains very alarming, to say nothing of it being termed a disaster, I think that the world, will have to lend considerable assistance to Kuwait in solving its problems.

[Grachev] That is true, moreover in putting out the fires and restoring the oil wells, because I do not think that Kuwait had serious financial problems. You know that it is one of the richest countries in the world, if not the richest in per-capita income. It is a country which possessed a fund of the future, as they called it—that is 20 percent of the national income.

[Tyssovskiy] Yes, I am prepared to agree with you, Yevgeniy Tikhonovich. But you know that even a great deal of money tends to disappear very, very quickly.

[Grachev] That is true. We can note that feature even in our own incomes.

[Antsiferov] You see, it seems to me that the very restoration of both Kuwait and Iraq will be an element in the general plan of creating a security system in the Persian Gulf zone.

[Tyssovskiy] Not just in the Persian Gulf, but evidently n the whole Near East region.

[Antsiferov] There is no doubt about that. But I would like to dwell now namely upon the Persian Gulf region. Why? Because, on the whole it is quite obvious that Iran is the main country which has in my view won, after the crisis. It implemented a sensible enough policy, a restrained, well-considered policy, and forgot, so to speak, its claims on Iraq as the country which began a war against it, and did not refer to the United States particularly as the great Satan. Such a clear position, inclined to reconcile the hostile sides, won Tehran quite a lot of respect. Another thing must be said here: After all, who indeed after Iraq will remain the main force in the region? By no means Saudi Arabia, the United Arab Emirates, or other minor emirates situated in the Arabian peninsula. They have a rather well-equipped army, but of just 150,000 men in total. Well, of course, that army would not be able to stand up to any regional major power, such as Iraq was. That is why the assistance of the allies, including the Americans, was needed, in particular, to defend Saudi Arabia from possible expansion by Iraq.

So, the question of creating a security system in the Persian Gulf cannot be limited only to Arab states now. Naturally, Cairo will be drawn into it. Naturally, Damascus will be drawn into it, too. But unavoidably, thought must be given to bringing Iran into operation in that system. Not just Iran, but Turkey, too. Turkey agrees to take part in that process. Turkey is a sufficiently strongly developed country, a strong military power, and not so to speak of an Islamic line of thought, although it is of course an Islamic country, but quite a secular one. To put it briefly, it could, in my view play the role of a certain useful balance, pacifying the situation in the whole region, if there was such a disposition of forces.

[Tyssovskiy] You know, I think that Turkey is a country which is now emerging from the political and economic shadows.

[Antsiferov] Yes. In any event, we have not spoken as much about Turkey over the past few decades as we have for the past few months now. Moreover, just look at the foreign policy being implemented by Turkey now. Even the very fact that the president of Turkey visited our country seems to say a lot to me. That is a vist by the leader of a country belonging to NATO at a time when the military structures of the Warsaw Pact are being eliminated, and the Warsaw treaty itself is ceasing to exist. A leader from the NATO bloc came to our country, and furthermore from Turkey, which is beginning to occupy a noticeable place in the formation of policy, even going beyond the frontiers of the region. It seems to me, Yuriy Konstantinovich, that in this connection, too, the creation of a regional security system, of which there has been talk, is really a matter of the near future.

[Tyssovskiy] I think that it is possible provided that constructive and fruitful attempts are made to approach the whole complex of Near East problems at the same time. [passage omitted]

Anti-Saddam Insurrection Movement Assessed

91UF0551A Moscow TRUD in Russian 13 Mar 91 p 3

[Report by IAN correspondent S. Kanayev for TRUD: "Iraq: Cup of Patience Runneth Over"]

[Text] Abu Dhabi, 12 March—With the end of hostilities in the Persian Gulf Iraq has found itself faced with economic catastrophe. But its causes go deeper than the visible results of the nighttime raids of American Stealth or British Tornado aircraft. Even before 2 August of last year the Iraqi economy was in crisis. Iraq's foreign debt amounted to more than $80 billion. Of these, approximately $60 billion were owed to Kuwait and Saudi Arabia, $10 billion to the Soviet Union.

The economic factor, specialists believe, played not the least part in the adoption of the decision to seize Kuwait. During the occupation the Iraqis pillaged and carried off valuables, equipment and property totaling approximately $25 billion. About a month after the invasion Sa'dun Hammadi, deputy prime minister of Iraq, declared that, having incorporated Kuwait, Iraq could resolve all its economic problems.

At the same time, the state situated on the fertile land of the Tigris and Euphrates interfluve could by no means be considered poor, particularly by "Third World" standards. Oil exports provided Iraq in peace time with approximately $18 billion a year, given a population of 15-17 million. However, per capita income in this country was steadily declining. At the same time, there was in inverse proportion to it an increase in spending on the Army, which in terms of numbers had moved into fourth place in the world. In the period from 1980 through 1988 (the war with Iran) per capita income declined 25 percent as a whole. Military spending, on the other hand, grew by 31 percent a year on average. A loss of 61 percent of oil revenues and available hard currency reserves totaling $35 billion were a result of the war with Iran also.

Iraq has known practically no peaceful life in the past 20 years: The constant military operations, sometimes subsiding, sometimes resuming with new force, in Iraqi Kurdistan, the eight-year war with Iraq and, finally, the Kuwait adventure.

The defeat in Kuwait was the last drop filling Iraqis' cup of patience to overflowing. Reports of protests not only in Basra and Kurdistan but the central areas of the country and in Baghdad itself are coming in. According to certain reports, several attempts on S. Husayn's life have already been made. The myth of the monolithic strength of the ruling regime formed over the years with the aid of subtle propaganda is being dispelled.

The public protests, which have now encompassed many of the country's cities, represent spontaneous anger, without, naturally, a single leadership or common organization. The main centers of the uprising—and this is no accident—are the northern Kurdish areas and southern Iraq, whose population is primarily Shi'ite. According to unofficial information, the Shi'ite population in Iraq is preponderant—a fact that is carefully concealed by the country's leadership, which is predominantly of Sunni origin. In addition, the Shi'ites, as a rule, constitute the neediest strata of Iraqi society. And this despite the fact that the main Shi'ite Muslim holy places, located in the cities of Najaf and Karbala, are in Iraq.

Ten years ago, when the war with Iraq had flared up, many specialists were of the opinion that one of its causes was the Iraqi leadership's aspiration to use an external conflict to overcome the internal tension, which, under the influence of the "Islamic revolution" in Iran, had assumed a clearly expressed religious nature. The Iraqi leaders' Muslim rhetoric, to which they began to resort at the time of the Kuwait crisis in the hope of winning the support of the Muslim world, should not confuse people: For many years Baghdad had pursued a policy of persecution of the Shi'ites on religious grounds.

The Shi'ite movement would now seem the most dangerous to S. Husayn. This is determined not only by the numbers of Shi'ites, but also the position of neighboring Shi'ite Iran to a large extent. In addition, the Iraqi Shi'ites potentially have an opportunity to create a single organization or directive center. It is sufficient to recall what kind of role was performed by the mosques in the course of the anti-shah revolution in Iran, when they became the principal organizing centers of the movement inside the country.

A different picture is taking shape currently in Kurdistan, in the north of Iraq. Following a number of heavy defeats by the Iraqi regular forces, the Kurdish national movement has in recent years found itself split into small political groups. But this people's aspiration to secure their national rights should not be underestimated. The struggle against Saddam's regime led to the formation of a coalition of various political groups united under the name of the Kurdistan Front, which is now heading the movement in the north of the country.

A third group currently opposed to the Ba'thist regime in Baghdad are the Iraqi emigres. According to certain figures, more than 1 million Iraqis live outside of Iraq at this time. These are people of the most diverse political beliefs and views. They include communists, the Shi'ite clergy, representatives of various Kurdish parties and national movements, the liberal intelligentsia and military figures who have fallen from favor. The Iraqi emigres are united by two main demands: the ouster of the S. Husayn regime and the organization of an international (or inter-Arab) trial of the head of the regime and the regime itself.

The representatives of more than 30 Iraqi opposition groups have now assembled in Beirut to formulate a common position in the struggle against the Baghdad government. The most influential among them are the Islamic Action Organization and the Supreme Assembly of the Islamic Revolution of Iraq. There is as yet no information allowing us to consider the emigre association a real political force capable of heading the struggle against the ruling regime. Nor is there information on its ties to the insurgents within the country. The development of events in Iraq could contribute to the consolidation of the emigres with the internal political opposition.

The situation in the central parts of Iraq is not entirely clear as yet. It is obvious that under the influence of propaganda indoctrination of many years' standing part of the population remains loyal to the regime, believing even that without S. Husayn even the existence of Iraq itself is impossible. Many people are unprepared for political action now, being paralyzed with fear. No totalitarian state in the world, perhaps, has had so intricate and ramified a system of repression. Some Iraqis overseas say that practically every Iraqi family has its "own" informer.

"After school, I want to joint the Mukhabarat (the general Arab name for counterintelligence and political investigation authorities)," one Iraqi juvenile told me. "It pays and feeds you well. It is easy work."

How many such boys have graduated from such a school? Nor should it be forgotten that in the 70 years of Iraq's existence this country has practically known no form of government other than military dictatorship.

American experts are reporting that S. Husayn has sufficient resources, military primarily, for putting down the public protests. The Iraqi president still has quite widespread support in the Arab world, which also needs to be taken into account. The "Arab man in the street" is impressed by a "strong personality" who volunteered "to put Israel in its place" and he prefers to close his eyes to the events occurring inside Iraq. They do not affect him directly.

As of this time the spontaneous anti-Saddam uprising continues to gain momentum. According to reports, it is being joined by certain regular units of the Iraqi Army. It is difficult to say as yet how the civil war that is flaring up in Iraq will end. The ruling regime has, to all appearances, preserved, despite the military defeat, a reserve of strength, which could enable it to hold out for some time.

How will events develop further? Much will depend on the position of the Army, specifically the forces that extricated themselves from Kuwait....

The news coming from various sources concerning the threat of the use of chemical weapons against the insurgents is disturbing. According to certain information, attempts have already been made to use them in Najaf and Karbala.

Commentary Eyes U.S. Assessment of PLO Role

LD1503222691 Moscow Radio Peace and Progress in Arabic 1400 GMT 15 Mar 91

[Andrey Vasilyev commentary]

[Text] U.S. President George Bush announced that his country does not intend to resume contacts with the PLO. In a joint news conference with French President Francois Mitterrand, George Bush justified his decision by saying that the organization did not play the necessary card in the Persian Gulf conflict.

Our radio commentator Andrey Vasilyev, who specializes in Near East affairs, wrote saying that the United States broke the dialogue with the PLO representatives even before the conflict in the Persian Gulf started. The reason for this was the failed operation of landing Palestinian commandoes along the Israeli coast. The White House accused the organization of continuing to practice terrorist methods in its activity. It must be said that there was failure to achieve notable progress in the U.S.-Palestinian talks for reasons which are completely understood. The United States announced and is

announcing the suspicion stance on the idea of establishing an independent Palestinian state. George Bush affirmed this at his above-mentioned news conference.

On the basis of the fact that the PLO's main aim is to obtain statehood for the Palestinian people, it is difficult to imagine that the parties in the dialogue will find a common language. It is especially unlikely to believe that the United States has tried wholeheartedly to reach an understanding with the Palestinian resistance movement in the present circumstances after Yasir 'Arafat announced publicly his support for Saddam Husayn's acts. Despite all this, the need to settle the Arab-Israeli confrontation, which has made the Near East a powder keg for more than 40 years, emerges now more than ever before.

What are precisely the steps which must be taken in the diplomatic field in order to start a real move toward a solution to the Palestinian issue? The United States hopes that changes will occur in some Arab states' stances. It seems from Syria, Jordan, and Lebanon. Presumably in the meantime the results of the Gulf war should make these countries look with more acceptance at the possibility of holding direct negotiations with Israel. The United States is however clearly wrong. The Jordanian king cannot allow himself the pleasure of taking such a step as his own existence depends to a large extent on the inclination of Palestinians who represent half of Jordan's population.

Syrian President Hafiz al-Asad has not put forward any initiative. He stresses that the solution as a whole must come through the convening of an international peace conference on the Near East. It is also difficult to talk about the Lebanese policy as it is not clear who has real power in that country. The PLO will not succeed in the end in doing without, in anyway, a Near East solution. The tarnishing of its reputation somehow in the international arena does not mean that it has ceased to benefit from the support of Palestinians in the occupied territories and Yasir 'Arafat will naturally have his say in this field.

West Europe

FRG's Genscher Meets Bessmertnykh, Gorbachev

Interviewed Prior to Visit

LD1603121391 Moscow TASS International Service in Russian 1726 GMT 15 Mar 91

[By TASS correspondents Sergey Sosnovskiy and Nikolay Kalintsev]

[Text] Bonn, 15 Mar (TASS)—In the first place, my visit to the USSR will serve as a continuation of the political exchange of views with the Soviet leadership, first and foremost with my new colleague, Aleksandr Bessmertnykh, Hans-Dietrich Genscher, the FRG foreign minister said today in an interview with TASS correspondents in conjunction with his forthcoming visit to Moscow.

The USSR Supreme Soviet's recent ratification of the treaty on the final settlement in relation to Germany, and also the bilateral treaties of cooperation between FRG and the USSR signify a new beginning in relations between our countries. Due to this, my discussions with Aleksandr Bessmertnykh, foreign minister, and with Mikhail Gorbachev, the USSR president, will concentrate on specific aspects of the new development in relations between the unified sovereign Germany and the Soviet Union. Central in our discussions will be the issues of further development of the European-wide process in accordance with the principles of the Paris Charter for a new Europe, said H.-D. Genscher.

Giving real substance to the fundamental agreements in Paris is one of the main points on the European agenda for 1991. I would like to remind you that in accordance with our invitation, the first session of the Council of Foreign Ministers of the CEMA member states will take place in June of this year in Berlin. There the landmarks on the route to the future Europe will be marked out. This will also be discussed in Moscow.

The head of the FRG's foreign policy department continued that the Soviet leadership, in the area of foreign policy, is maintaining the course of "the new thinking." We sensed this consistency, first and foremost in the speech of the Soviet leadership supporting the ratification of the "two-plus-four" treaty, which as we know was not at all uncontentious in the USSR. The aforementioned course also applies to the Soviet Union's stance during the Persian Gulf conflict and its consistent stance on dismantling the military structures of the Warsaw Pact.

The Soviet Union is needed by the whole world as an active and constructive participant in international politics, in which it must bear responsibility according to its role. This applies, for example, to the European-wide policy of stability. The Paris accords now need to prove their efficacy, and in order for this to occur it is essential that the treaty on conventional armed forces in Europe come into force.

German-Soviet relations, the foreign minister emphasized, preserve their central significance not only for our two countries, but also for the future development of Europe. The future of our relations, in our view, should be defined by growing cooperation in such classic areas of cooperation as economics, trade, culture, and scientific exchange. We would like to add to this in the future our expertise in such spheres of cooperation as the protection of the environment, fundamental scientific research, and advanced technology, with the help of which our relations will be able to emerge on a completely new level. It is worth adding to this specific

bilateral aspects. I would mention the situation of Germans in the USSR. We want to help them preserve their language, culture, and traditions, and by doing this, help them to remain in the USSR.

The central significance of our relations, which I have mentioned earlier, places a great responsibility on both sides, which means that we should do everything to avoid interference of any description, H.-D. Genscher emphasized in conclusion.

Arrives 17 Mar

LD1703154191 Moscow TASS in English 1522 GMT 17 Mar 91

[By TASS correspondent Sergey Riabikin]

[Text] Moscow March 17 TASS—German Foreign Minister Hans-Dietrich Genscher today arrived in Moscow on a working visit.

The visit's agenda includes two meetings with Soviet Foreign Minister Aleksandr Bessmertnykh. Soviet President Mikhail Gorbachev is expected to meet the German minister on Monday.

On Monday morning, Genscher is due to meet representatives of Soviet Germans in the German Embassy.

Holds Talks With Bessmertnykh

LD1703192191 Moscow TASS International Service in Russian 1823 GMT 17 Mar 91

[By TASS diplomatic correspondent Sergey Ryabikin]

[Text] Moscow, 17 Mar (TASS)—The first round of talks between Aleksandr Bessmertnykh, USSR foreign minister, and Hans-Dietrich Genscher, FRG foreign minister who arrived in Moscow today, has ended. Reviewing its results, Aleksandr Bessmertnykh told a TASS correspondent that the conversation had taken place in an "exceptionally businesslike and constructive way." In his words, there was a detailed exchange of opinions on the situation regarding Soviet-German relations and their prospects. The main conclusion from today's meeting the Soviet minister stressed, is that the two countries take as their starting point the need and opportunity for a joint solution of problems which arise and the fact that Soviet-German relations will play a key stabilizing role in Europe. "In the economic and other spheres there are" exceptionally vast prospects for cooperation, he said.

According to the Soviet minister the political sphere of relations between the USSR and the FRG in the wake of the ratification of a range of Soviet-German treaties at the USSR Supreme Soviet was also discussed. As he noted, these documents will also be ratified soon by the FRG Bundestag. Everything here is proceeding at a "fairly good and dynamic level." The ministers also touched on certain regional issues. Particularly great attention was paid to the Persian Gulf and the Near East where, in the words of Aleksandr Bessmertnykh, there was a discovery of "a broad sphere of coinciding views and assessments."

The head of the Soviet foreign service said that tomorrow morning will see a more detailed discussion of issues connected with weapons, political problems in Europe, economic relations between the two countries, and several other problems.

Meets Germans' Representative

LD1803095891 Hamburg DPA in German 0917 GMT 18 Mar 91

[Text] Moscow (DPA)—Representatives of the Soviet-German minority, in a talk with Federal Minister Hans-Dietrich Genscher in Moscow on Monday, jointly called for their own territory. This was learned from delegation circles. Only last week a split in the minority loomed at a congress held by the Soviet Germans in Moscow. One wing, supported by the Soviet leadership, advocated Soviet-German autonomy, but without territory.

In their one-hour conversation with Genscher, representatives from both wings pointed out the significance of their own territory for the cultural identity of Soviet Germans, it is reported. At present, however, it is still not clear where and within what borders such a territory for Soviet-German autonomy would be situated. The FRG delegation again explained Bonn's efforts to set up a German consulate-General in Alma-Ata, in Kazakhstan. At present, about 1 million of the approximately 2 million Soviet-Germans in the USSR live in Kazakhstan.

Setting up a consulate-general is being delayed at present, according to Bonn sources, because of the negotiations with the authorities in Kazakhstan, as Moscow alone is not competent to deal with this. The federal foreign minister reportedly said during the conversation that following the ratification of the German-Soviet General Treaty on Good-Neighborliness he sees better opportunities for the German side to support the German minority, above all in maintaining their cultural identity.

Resumes Talks 18 Mar

LD1803072791 Moscow TASS in English 0712 GMT 18 Mar 91

[By TASS diplomatic correspondents Sergey Ryabikin and Leonid Timofeyev]

[Text] Moscow March 18 TASS—Soviet Foreign Minister Aleksandr Besmertnykh and German Foreign Minister Hans-Dietrich Genscher, who arrived for a brief working visit to Moscow on Sunday, resumed negotiations in the USSR Foreign Ministry mansion today.

Summing up the results of the first round of talks in an interview with TASS on Sunday evening, Bessmertnykh

said that the main conclusion is that both countries stress the need for the joint solution of arising problems.

He said that Soviet-German relations will play the key stabilising role in Europe. As to the political area of Soviet-German relations, the Soviet foreign minister believes that everything is proceeding at a good pace in this area.

This morning Genscher met representatives of Soviet Germans at the German Embassy.

Genscher is to be received by Soviet President Mikhail Gorbachev.

Discusses Arms Reductions

LD1803111391 Moscow All-Union Radio Mayak Network in Russian 1000 GMT 18 Mar 91

[Text] TASS correspondents have just reported: At the second round of talks between Aleksandr Bessmertnykh, minister of foreign affairs of the USSR, and Hans-Dietrich Genscher, which have ended, problems of arms limitation were discussed.

A TASS correspondent was told by Vitaliy Churkin, representative of the USSR Ministry of Foreign Affairs, that among other things issues connected with the treaty on armed forces reduction in Europe were discussed in detail with the participation of experts, as were several problems of bilateral relations between the Soviet Union and the Federal Republic of Germany.

Meets With Gorbachev 18 Mar

LD1803094291 Moscow TASS in English 0920 GMT 18 Mar 91

[Text] Moscow March 18 TASS—President Mikhail Gorbachev began talks with German Foreign Minister Hans Dietrich Genscher in the Kremlin today.

Genscher arrived for a working visit to the Soviet Union on Sunday.

Gorbachev and Genscher are expected to discuss bilateral relations, a Middle East settlement and disarmament and international security issues.

Genscher has already held two rounds of talks with Soviet Foreign Minister Alexander Bessmertnykh. Early today he met a group of Soviet Germans.

Genscher's two-day visit opens a new stage in Soviet-German relations and their stable development is crucial for European and world stability, Soviet diplomats said.

Political & Social

Gorbachev Televised Address Supports Union

PM1503162191 Moscow SELSKAYA ZHIZN in Russian 16 Mar 91 p 1

[Televised speech by M.S. Gorbachev on 15 March: "Preserving Our Great Union State"]

[Text] So, we are on the threshold of the all-Union referendum. This is the first time in the history of the fatherland that such an event is taking place. In participating in the referendum each one of us must be fully aware of the fact that he is resolving the chief issue affecting the present and future of our multinational state. It is a question the country's destiny, the destiny of our motherland, of our common home, and of how we are to live, and how our children and grandchildren are to live.

This is an issue on the kind of scale and significance that stands above the interests of individual parties, social groups, and political and social movements. Only the people themselves are entitled to decide it. I call upon you all, dear fellow citizens, to participate in the all-Union referendum and to answer "yes" to the question that has been posed.

Our "yes" will preserve the integrity of a state that is 1,000 years old and has been created by the labor, intellect, and the innumerable sacrifices of many generations. Of a state where the destinies of peoples, millions of human destinies, our destinies are inextricably interwoven.

Our "yes" means respect for the power [derzhava] that has repeatedly proved its ability to uphold the independence and security of the peoples who are united within that power.

Our "yes" is a guarantee of the fact that the flames of war will never singe our country to whose lot many ordeals have fallen.

Our "yes" does not mean the preservation of old procedures with the domination of the center and with the republics deprived of their rights. Positive results in the referendum will open up the way to a radical renewal of the union state and to its transformation into a federation of sovereign republics where the rights and freedoms of citizens of all nationalities will be guaranteed.

Our "yes" in the referendum and the conclusion of the Union treaty will make it possible to put an end to the devastating processes now taking place in our society and to make a resolute turn in the direction of the restoration of normal conditions of life and work.

As I understand it, this is precisely what the people need, and this is precisely what people want most of all. They are fed up with endless verbal wrangling and the whipping up of passions. They are demanding the solution of practical issues, both as far as production is concerned and also the consumer market, legitimacy, law and order, and the activity of state bodies. In a word, people want life to embark along a normal course.

The success of the referendum—and this I also want to stress—will open up new opportunities for the confident continuation of all the reforms started in the country linking our great plans and their implementation.

One more thing, comrades. It will be difficult, if possible at all, to solve the tasks facing us without concord and cooperation within society. It is necessary therefore to halt the growth of intolerance, animosity, and, in some places, even hostility before it is too late. We can also do this in concert, with everyone pulling together, so to speak. A positive result in the referendum would initiate the consolidation of society.

It is my firm conviction that if a profound split occurs in society there will be no victors. Everyone will lose. All of us will be losers. It is difficult even to imagine how much misfortune and unhappiness would be entailed by the disuniting of the country and by the setting of people and peoples at odds and that would not only be only our misfortune. The disintegration of the power that is today one of the foundations of the modern world, is fraught with universal upheavals of, I would say, unprecedented scale.

In connection with the forthcoming referendum I am receiving many letters, thousands of them. Participants in a rally in Lipetsk also sent a letter to me recalling the words of Yaroslav the Wise: "If you live in hatred, in strife, and discord, you will perish yourselves and you will ruin the land of your fathers and forefathers who secured this land by their great labor. So live in peace, brother heeding brother." This is indeed the counsel of a wise man and patriot.

In a word, each of us today is faced with a historic choice. I realize that you have already done a lot of thinking, weighed the question a great deal, have had discussions with your friends and within your families and, most likely, you have already made your decision. All the same, I call on all of you, dear compatriots: In the referendum say "yes" firmly to our great union state; preserve it for yourselves and for your descendents.

Voting on 17 March Union Referendum Reported

Voting Begins

LD1703095991 Moscow TASS in English 0951 GMT 17 Mar 91

[Text] Moscow March 17 TASS—An all-union referendum began at seven a.m. local time in the Soviet Union today, TASS correspondents report from all over the country.

The referendum does not have, perhaps, analogues in world history. People are to decide on whether the union should be preserved as a state and subject of international law.

A positive outcome of the referendum would accelerate the process of signing a new union treaty and stop disruptive centrifugal trends which may eventually lead to the conversion of the ussr into a "huge Lebanon".

More than 1,300 polling stations opened for referenda of the USSR and the Russian Federation in Khabarovsk territory, Soviet Far East.

The polling is being monitored by people's deputies of the USSR and the Russian Federation, local councils and representatives of various parties and public organisations.

There was a very high turnout of voters in the Jewish autonomous region. More than 50 per cent of people cast their votes there by noon local time.

In Salekhard, the Yamal-Nenets autonomous region of Russia, 12,303 people already voted by seven a.M. Because in some remote places polling began somewhat earlier.

All 2,500 polling stations are functioning in towns and villages of Tatarstan, a spokesman for the central electoral commission of the republic, told TASS. Referendum organisers there prepared one million ballot papers in the Tatar language, 1,700,000 in Russian, 100,000 in the Chuvash, Udmurt and Mari languages.

People go to the polls in Kirghizstan since early in the morning. All 350 polling stations are open in the republic.

Kazakhstan became the only republic to bring up its own wording of the question for referendum. An extraordinary session of the republican parliament modified the wording of the question suggested by the USSR parliament.

The wording now reads: "Do you consider it necessary to preserve the USSR as an alliance of equal sovereign states?". The principal meaning of the phrase is the same but it has become more concise and specific.

All 10,499 polling stations opened at seven a.m. in Kazakhstan. People there are calmly and responsibly discharging their civic duty because they realise that depending on their choice is the future of not only the republic and the country but also the position of the entire international community.

Almost ten million people have the right to express their opinion during the referendum there.

On the strength of random public opinion polls taken in various regions of the country in recent weeks, sociologists maintain that not less than 60 per cent of voters will declare in favour of preserving the union.

Six republics decided against holding an all-union referendum: Lithuania, Latvia, Estonia, Georgia, Moldavia, and Armenia. However, first, the federal law enables people in these republics to exercise their civil right to participate in the referendum. Second, the non-participation of the six republics in the referendum will change its outcome little: People there account for only about ten per cent of the Soviet Union's approximately 200 million voters.

It is not ruled out that some people in republics will interpret results of the referendum in their own way. Still, despite possible political manoeuvres, the significance of the all-union referendum is immense: It will show whether the idea of a single multi-ethnic state has exhausted itself or, on the contrary, people want to live as one family, as has been the case for centuries.

Gorbachev Votes, Comments

LD1703180991 Moscow Central Television First Program Network in Russian 1500 GMT 17 Mar 91

[Interview with USSR President Mikhail Sergeyevich Gorbachev by unidentified correspondent 17 March at Moscow's Oktyabrskiy Rayon polling station no. 11; from the "Television Service News" program—recorded]

[Text] In the eastern regions of our country voting has already ended. We have just been informed by the Central Commission for the USSR Referendum that over 80 percent of citizens registered in the electoral lists have been to the polling stations in the Central Asian republics and Kazakhstan. Now a report by our Moscow correspondents.

[Correspondent] Hundreds of Muscovites and journalists, both Soviet and foreign, today came to polling station No. 11 in Moscow's Oktyabrskiy Rayon, where Mikhail Sergeyevich Gorbachev voted. [video shows Gorbachev, wife, and entourage arriving at polling station, shaking hands with officials, taking ballot papers, and entering cubicles; Gorbachev and wife are then shown dropping their papers in the ballot box, then moving outside where Gorbachev speaks to assembled media]

Naturally, each of the foreign correspondents accredited in Moscow who were gathered here wanted to ask the USSR president a question.

[Correspondent] Does the result of the referendum have an effect on your leadership?

[Gorbachev] Well, I think all in all that the results of the referendum are important to all of us, both for the central authorities and the republican, just as they are important for the whole of public opinion. This is without doubt, and for all society. I think of such issues as the future of a state, a multinational one, behind which lie a thousand years of formation, of such a

complex history, and the issue of land, of land ownership. These are all questions that have to be determined, which the people alone have to decide. I cannot conceive of this in any other way. Such fundamental issues have to be decided by the people, and everyone else must subordinate themselves to the will of this people.

[Correspondent in crowd] Mikhail Sergeyevich, (?Separatist) tendencies may be leading to a splitting up of the armed forces and of the nuclear weapons in the country. How do you see the future development of [words indistinct] and the influence of this on the foreign policy of the Soviet Union, and the danger?

[Gorbachev] I am certain that we are moving toward a renewed Union, and the draft of the Union Treaty—the new Union Treaty which has been published, and which represents the outcome of the collective efforts of the plenipotentiary representatives of the republics—achieves a correct and rational division of the functions of the center and the republic. As you have noticed, in this draft, defense, the armed forces and their acivity—I won't repeat it—are all within the competence of the Union state. So this is in no way a case of the division of nuclear forces or the armed forces in general. But in the draft Constitution of the Russian Federation, on the other hand, an in connection with the introduction of presidential rule, as it proposes, one does have this point: that the president of Russia is declared commander in chief of the armed forces of the Russian Federation. Now this, if implemented—and I have already said this—could lead to something serious.

I think the people understand, and their support today for the Union Treaty and the renewed federation will be of immense importance in solving this question too, in the interests of the country, its, security, and its defense, and will simply be in the interest of stability between peoples.

[Correspondent] How do you evaluate the possibility of civil war?

[Gorbachev] Where? In your country or ours? [laughter] No, I will tell you frankly that the duty of politicians is to warn of danger—economic, political, or military danger, and so on. People must always be aware of the state of affairs in the country and around it, this is natural. At the same time, I think that what we are doing today, namely heading toward an All-Union Treaty, toward the reformation of our economy, toward the establishment of a state based on law, all of this will ultimately strengthen order, discipline, and interaction, and will create a completely different situation, a democratic one, in which the most complex issues will be tackled using democratic approaches. I will do everything in order to see that this process of democratic transformation continues, and where it is necessary—where the fate of the state, the people, or the constitution is in danger—I shall use all my plenipotentiary powers. I am convinced that we must do everything—and society has immense possibilities for this—to solve things without further exacerbation, and certainly without getting into such civil conflicts that would mean the confrontation of powerful forces, indeed, a schism in society.

I think we will succeed in avoiding this. When we speak of the referendum and about what has been proposed for the referendum, then this is the kind of issue which stands above the interests of various parties, sections, groups, and still more, the interests of individual politicians. This is a question of the destiny of the people, of the peoples, of the hundreds of peoples, of such an immense state—if you like, the destiny of our civilization. A great deal concerning where the whole of our civilization develops, and how it develops, will depend on how these processes continue here. This is not arrogance, it is just realities; such is the value of this country.

So, this is an issue that stands above all of this. It has to be addressed, irrespective of whoever wants to adapt whatever of his narrowly selfish group interests to this issue. This has to be rejected, I have urged this.

Voting Underway

LD1703131891 Moscow TASS International Service in Russian 1225 GMT 17 Mar 91

[By TASS correspondent Lev Aksenov]

[Excerpts] Moscow, 17 Mar (TASS)—"Voters are actively participating in today's USSR and Russian referendums," Dmitriy Karabanov, member of the RSFSR Russian Soviet Federated Socialist Republic [RSFSR] Central Commission on Holding the Referendums, has confirmed. In a conversation with the TASS correspondent, he stated that by 1000 hours Moscow time, about 41 percent of the electorate had already voted in the oblasts situated within the capital's time zone. By then—taking account of the difference in time—over 60 percent of the voters had been to the polling stations in the eastern parts of Russia. Such reports, for instance, have been received from Omsk, Blagovechchensk, and other major cities in the east of the republic.

"This information," the member of the central commission stressed, "shows that the referendums are proceeding successfully." [passage omitted]

A report has been received from a constituency in Sverdlovsk (in the South Urals) that besides Union and Russian referendum ballot papers, citizens have been handed forms containing a question on the voters' attitude toward the recall of the RSFSR people's deputy elected for the particular constituency, but since the republic's parliament has not yet adopted a law on the procedure for recalling Russian deputies, a decision on this issue does not seem possible. [passage omitted]

TASS Reports High Turnout

LD1803112491 Moscow TASS International Service in Russian 1050 GMT 18 Mar 91

[By TASS correspondent Vladimir Isachenkov]

[Text] Moscow, 18 Mar TASS—The poll in yesterday's referendum on the future of the USSR was quite heavy. A TASS correspondent learned from sources close to the republican commissions of the USSR referendum that, according to preliminary figures, in Belorussia 82.8 percent of the electors took part in the vote, in Uzbekistan 95.4 percent, in Kazakhstan 88.2 percent, in Azerbaijan over 70 percent, in Kyrgyzstan 92.8 percent, in Tajikistan 93.5 percent, and in Turkmenia 97.7 percent.

The figures for the two largest republics, Russia and the Ukraine, should become known this afternoon.

Irregularities Reported

LD1703184191

[Editorial report] Moscow Radio Rossii Network in Russian at 1200 GMT on 17 March broadcasts a 9-minute report by Radio Rossii correspondents Yevgeniya Kondratyeva and Andrey Pishchayev on the referendum.

The report begins by quoting Valentin Simonin, head of the Russian Soviet Federated Socialist Republic, RSFSR, Referendum Central Commission Secretariat, who has said that the Russian referendum is proceeding peacefully. Kondratyeva gives specific percentages of those having voted in some Far Eastern areas and lists areas where the relevant soviets have decided not to hold the referendum. However, she points out that in Ryazan and Smolensk oblasts, Tataria and Tambov, voting slips have been delivered, although the local soviets decided against holding the referendum. In the republic as a whole, she says, 103.3 million electors are registered.

Kondratyeva goes on to say: "In Latvia the referendum is proceeding calmly. The [word indistinct] authorities of the republic have distanced themselves from the referendum, in accordance with a decision by the Latvian Council of Ministers. The Communist Party on the CPSU platform and also Army units have taken on the role of organizers of the referendum. Voting started in the republic on 14 March. Latvian radio has information that at this time some 100,000 people had voted. There is interesting information about how the voting is going.

"A journalist from the newspaper SOVETSKAYA MOLODEZH went round five polling stations with his passport on Friday, the first day of voting, and voted at each station. He spoke about this yesterday evening on Latvian television and radio. There are 302 polling stations in the republic as a whole, and another 129 in the Army units. The organizers of the referendum are complaining to the authorities that they refused to give them premises, but fortunately there have not been any incidents.

"We are receiving a lot of calls asking how many times people taking part in the referenda—the Union, Russian, and regional ones—can register their vote. We have been told by the RSFSR Referendum Central Commission Secretariat that people may only register once, whether they are taking part in one, two, or three—as in Moscow, for example—referenda."

Pishchayev then recounts complaints received from listeners about irregularities. He says: "We have been told that in Sverdlovskiy rayon in Moscow, people have been given several Union slips each, allegedly by mistake. In the capital's Cheremushki rayon, we have been told, the lists have been drawn up very badly in polling station no. 89. There is a long queue. In Sevastopolskiy Rayon, they are not giving out the slips for Moscow, or are only giving it when it is demanded insistently. Similar calls are coming in from Krasnogvardeyskiy Rayon.

"Members of the Democratic Russia Movement have told us that this morning Central Television and Mayak Radio broadcast—in the opinion of those calling—obvious appeals for people to vote for the Union, although everyone knows all propaganda is forbidden on the day of the referendum.

"We have received a call from a member of the armed forces from Balashikha, saying that he was not given a slip for the Russian referendum in his polling station, under the pretext that the Army is under Union subordination.

"These decisions by the electoral commission are illegal."

The report concludes with more voting figures for eastern areas, referring to different local times.

Results Possible by 20 March

LD1703094891 Moscow All-Union Radio First Program Radio-1 Network in Russian 0900 GMT 17 Mar 91

[Text] Since this morning, the Russian Soviet Federated Socialist Republic [RSFSR] central commission for the holding of the all-Union and the RSFSR referenda has been receiving reports from polling stations on RSFSR territory. In all, 103 million people are on the voting list. In accordance with the RSFSR law on referendum, this is the first time in the history of our state that citizens under investigation have been given the right to vote. The results of the two referenda in Russia will be known within 10 days, but preliminary results may be known even on 20 March.

Early Voting Results Cited

LD1803091191 Moscow TASS International Service in Russian 0758 GMT 18 Mar 91

[Text] Moscow, 18 Mar (TASS)—The first preliminary results of yesterday's union and Russian referendums have begun to come in to Russia's Central Referendums Commission. A TASS correspondent was told by the

RSFSR Central Commission chairman Vasiliy Kazakov that 53 percent of those who voted in Tyumen Oblast (Western Siberia) favored preserving the USSR. The same percentage of citizens there, but this time of the total of the electors, supported the idea of introducing the post of president of the Russian Federation.

In Chita Oblast more than 80 percent of the electors took part in the voting on 17 March, with about 85 percent in favor of preserving the USSR. But the question of the Russian referendum was answered positively by only just over half of all the inhabitants of the oblast who voted.

On the forsaken icy Arctic island of Vrangel, 80.4 percent of employees at the polar station voted in favor of the unity of the union, and 72.2 percent supported the idea of the post of a Russian president being introduced.

The high turnout indicated that the majority of USSR citizens are aware of their responsibility for the future of the state.

USSR President Mikhail Gorbachev gave journalists an interview at his polling station on Sunday. He was convinced that there would be a positive outcome to the union referendum and that the union treaty would soon be signed. He said that the six republics—Latvia, Lithuania, Estonia, Georgia, Armenia, and Moldova—that are boycotting the referendum will in time come to realize that joining a renewed union would be in their national interests. The Soviet leader reacted negatively to the idea of the introduction of the post of Russian president, commenting that the way it was conceived in the draft Russian constitution, the Presidency would mean a schism in the union.

In the Ukraine and Belorussia, the Central Asian republics and Kazakhstan, the all-union referendum was held in a businesslike atmosphere.

Despite the decision of the authorities of the three Baltic republics—Latvia, Lithuania, and Estonia—not to hold an official referendum on the issue of preserving the unity of the USSR, hundreds of thousands of inhabitants of these republics turned up at the polling stations on Sunday.

The situation remained tense in Moldova, the Supreme Soviet of which had decided to hold the USSR referendum on the territory of the republic. On the day of the referendum in the republic, the military units and Army recruiting centers, where, in accordance with union laws, polling stations for the holding of the referendum had been set up, found themselves in a veritable state of seige. TASS was told that People's Front supporters opposing the vote were acting in a concerted manner. Fifteen of the 17 recruiting centers where polling stations had been set up were subjected to a blockade. Nonetheless, tens of thousands of people voted there.

In the republics of the Transcaucasus, attitudes to the holding of the vote varied. As one knows, Armenia and Georgia decided not to hold the all-union referendum. However, people wishing to express their feelings about the future of the union came to the polling stations at military units in Georgia on Sunday. Contrary to the demands of the leadership of Georgia, the soviets of people's deputies of Abkhaziya and South Ossetia decided to hold the all- union referendum on their territories.

Preliminary results of the voting in the various republics and regions of the country are still coming in.

Lobbying Considered Unlawful

LD1703215791 Moscow Radio Rossii Network in Russian 1930 GMT 17 Mar 91

[Aleksey Abakumov commentary]

[Text] Over the last few days everything—or almost everything—has been said about referendums in general and about the Union referendum in particular, and my colleagues have already spoken a fair bit about it too. Frankly, I would have had nothing to add to this had it not been for this particular "Vremya" program. I think it has given me a reason for being polemical.

The program's announcer reported that today the future of our country is being decided; our future, end of quote. It is difficult to argue with this. But after this came the phrase that the main referendum of those being held in the country is the one about the fate of the Union. I do not know. I am not convinced that the results drawn from it sometime or another will make our life better. Even if everyone said yes today, I do not think that would remove the desire to leave the Union in the republics not participating in the plebiscite. Even more so since, as Prime Minister Valentin Pavlov said in the same "Vremya" program: The renewed Union should be built upon a voluntary joining together, and not on coercion.

If the majority were to say yes, then in such a case the decision on the dissolution of the USSR would not be adopted, and, furthermore, even the Union government would not resign. Incidentally, this has already been spoken of.

At the same time, a yes to the Russian referendum would result in very tangible consequences. In the view of the experts, a Russian president elected by all the people would be able to use decress, as is done at the Union level, and in this way would be able to have a more significant effect on the life of Russia. Even more so taking into account the fact that the activities of the republic's parliament and government are blocked. Moreover, the situation which has taken shape today would hardly have been possible, when, in the view of observers, the RSFSR deputies have been forced into holding an extraordinary congress, and it could once again dissolve in insubstantial polemics and mutual recriminations—at the very moment when concrete

actions and practical resolutions are so necessary. Therefore, the theory about the Union referendum being the priority is to some degree doubtful. This is also a cause for being polemical.

Now one more observation. At 2020 hours, someone called us at the studio and a female listener informed us that there was still more than 30 minutes until the end of the referendum in, for example, Moscow. Meanwhile, the "Vremya" program is carrying out open agitation in favor of the Union. This is in direct contradiction to the law on the referendum.

And here I recall how this afternoon I spoke with a very elderly lady: "How should I vote today, my dear?" the old lady asked me. "I do not know; decide for yourself," I replied. Today, any sort of agitation either in favor or against is forbidden, but what is permitted for Jupiter .... [as heard]

Maj Gen Karbinov Denies Coup Rumors

LD1603172591 Moscow World Service in English 1210 GMT 16 Mar 91

[Interview with Major General Aleksandr (Karbinov) by unidentified correspondent; place and date not given; Karbinov speaks in Russian with superimposed English translation—recorded]

[Text] Forecasts of a coup in the Soviet Union appear now and then in the Soviet mass media. Our special reporter has decided to find out the truth from an official of the service that, in any state, must know everything that concerns the security of the state. Here is Major General Aleksandr (Karbinov), who has all the information gleaned by the KGB on the issue at his disposal:

[Karbinov]) There have been no concrete data in the KGB to show the preparation of a military coup. Voices can be heard that the KGB, as a matter of fact, is itself the initiator of preparing such coups. I'd like to state that today the state Security Committee is strictly following the course for perestroyka, which has been formulated in documents of our supreme bodies of power. For this reason, the KGB and its staff are not interested in any coup. We are againt a dictatorship; we want more democracy and glasnost about our activities. I think that, on the whole, people in this country will not favor putting up a strong hand in power or following a path of a military dictatorship. The people will not accept that, and the KGB will never stand on the other side of the barricades against the people, that's for sure.

[Correspondent] In this kind, how could you define the nature of these rumors and their sources?

[Karbinov]) I think this information proceeds from those people who dramatize the situation. I don't feel this stems from deep thinking, rather ordinary ideas gain public currency with a person who has seen or heard something but has failed to analyze it. Instead, he or she passes this off for objective information.

[Correspondent] Could you cite a concrete example of a rumor taking effect, or, as you said, ordinary ideas transforming in society into something else?

[Karbinov]) Maj. Gen. Karbinov says that the latest examples are suspicion that the KGB has allegedly kept bugging devices in the building of parliament of the largest Soviet republic, the Russian Federation. There was, indeed, a room there with some KGB equipment, which however had a totally different function, namely that of information protection of the building. Such systems are now known all over the world and are used for protecting state secrets and preventing leakage of information. The Russian government set up a special commission which has established that this equipment cannot be used for bugging conversations in any room. All of a sudden, someone passed this off for something totally different. I think that the people who raised hue and cry about those premises pursued provocatory aims. I would say that the Russian parliament will give due assessment of these actions.

Refugees Expected If Union Collapses

91P50122A Moscow SELSKAYA ZHIZN in Russian 8 Mar 91 p 1

[Unattributed article: "The Sociologist's Window: How Much Will Refugees Cost?"]

[Text] The collapse of the Union would certainly cause a flood of migration from the so-called non-native population. Thus, "foreigners" in their own country could total around 60 million people. According to calculations, compensation costs for a single refugee amount to roughly the following:

—worker—56,000 rubles
—pensioner—20,000 rubles
—dependant—16,000 rubles Enormous costs for settling refugees will turn out to be beyond the scope of any one republic.

Economic

Gorbachev To Meet Kemerovo Soviet Leader

LD1703084491 Moscow World Service in English 0800 GMT 17 Mar 91

[Text] Work has resumed at three mines of the Kuznetsk coal basin in Siberia. Thirty-four of the region's 76 mines continue their strike although some of them are producing coal for their own needs.

Early next week the USSR president is to meet with the chairman of the Kemerovo Soviet to discuss the pressing problems of the region.

Gorbachev Talks With Leading Economists

LD1603093991 Moscow TASS International Service in Russian 0909 GMT 16 Mar 91

[By TASS special correspondents Lyudmila Shvedova and Viktor Bezbrezhnyy]

[Text] Moscow, 16 Mar (TASS)—A detailed conversation about the socioeconomic and political situation in the country started this morning in the Kremlin at a meeting between USSR President Mikhail Gorbachev and the country's leading economists. Taking part in it are statesmen and public figures, members of the Cabinet of Ministers, parliamentarians, economists, and representatives of central economic departments.

It was noted at the meeting's opening that it is a continuation of traditional consultations. Taking place as it is in a situation characterized by a growth of crisis phenomena in society, in the first place in the sphere of the economy, it nevertheless is not of an emergency nature. The aim of today's conversation in the Kremlin is the search for ways which would make it possible to impart new dynamics to reform, to determine priorities, and to put guideposts in place within the context of the present-day socioeconomic and political situation in society.

At the meeting it was stressed that the country's leadership adheres firmly to the course toward reforms, advocates their decisive continuation and deepening, and does not intend to abandon this course.

Economists Cited on Talks

LD1603180491 Moscow TASS International Service in Russian 1650 GMT 16 Mar 91

[By TASS special correspondents Lyudmila Shvedova and Viktor Bezbrezhnyy]

[Text] Moscow, 16 Mar (TASS)—As reported earlier, a meeting is in progress at the Kremlin between USSR President Mikhail Gorbachev and some of the country's leading economists. The meeting continues a tradition and, as was noted at its opening, is not of an emergency nature. Its purpose is to analyze fulfillment of previous decisions in the economy and examine the processes which are taking place in this sphere in the light of the present situation. It is, above all, a matter of making certain practical adjustments.

In the interval, the TASS correspondents asked some of those taking part in the meeting to share their impressions.

Today's conversation, said Sergey Alekseyev, chairman of the USSR Constitutional Supervision Committee, is not just about how to get out of the present situation of crisis, which in some respects has now assumed the character of a dissolution of society. What is going on at the Kremlin is a serious, detailed, and constructive discussion of economic policy. A detailed analysis is being made of the processes that are happening in society. Academics representing a variety of outlooks have been invited to the conversation. In the opinion of Sergey Alekseyev, "the situation is very serious, but we must not fall into panic or despair, we must move forward." He said the main milestones of progress in this direction point to the need to pay more attention to agriculture. A radical breakthrough is needed on this issue. Work associated with switching enterprises over to leasehold must be continued. This is the most effective and worthy means of enhancing economic efficiency. Greater attention must also be devoted to organzing commercial and industrial "exchanges" for wholesale trade, so as to put an end to barter as an element of the "wild", unorganized market.

"Our principle", the chairman of the USSR Constitutional Supervision Committee said by way of characterizing the country's political situation, "must be the slogan 'not one step away from the law!' and I would add, not a step from the planned reforms. The main thought that can be traced both in the president's speech at today's meeting, and in the remarks of the others taking part, is this: We have got to come out in favor of a resolute continuation and deepening of the policy of reform and must on no account renounce that policy."

"Today we can speak of successfully resolving our economic problems only if there is political stability in our society and only if the law is carried out," USSR First Deputy Prime Minister Vitaliy Doguzhiyev says. "We now know how to rescue the economy; the trouble is that in the localities, elementary obligations are not being fulfilled." In such a state of affairs, he noted, we do not have enough of any of our resouces to meet even our first priorities. All must unite to solve one common main task: To get the national economy back on its feet.

Pavlov Discusses Meeting

LD1603205991 Moscow Central Television First Program Network in Russian 1800 GMT 16 Mar 91

[Report by correspondent V. Suntsov on President Mikhail Gorbachev's meeting with the USSR's "leading economists' in the Kremlin on 16 March, including comments by USSR Prime Minister Valentin Pavlov and G.A. Grinberg; Grinberg is not further identified; from the "Vremya" newscast]

[Text] [Suntsov] State and public figures, members of the Cabinet of Ministers, legislators, scholars, and economists participated in the meeting. Both in the address by the USSR president and in the statements by the participants, a main point could be heard: The decisive continuation and broadening of reform were necesary, and it was not to be renounced under any circumstance. The priorities in the reform of our economy were also discussed during the meeting. Here are two interviews during the intervals of the meeting:

[Begin recording] [Suntsov] Valentin Sergeyevich, many of the country's leading economists are participating in

the meeting's work from various regions. What is your view? Do those ideas that the economists participating in the meeting have expressed coincide with the plans of the Cabinet of Ministers?

[Pavlov] Essentially, among the basic, if not main, aims of this meeting is to examine, generally speaking, the action program we are now preparing. On the other hand, it is to explain things from the view of fundamental approaches, the extent to which it is correct as regards time, space, and interrelations. The main thing being discussed today, and everyone is unanimously saying, is that there is only one way out: the creation of more favorable conditions for a developing production. If we can find the mechanism that would arouse interest in increasing the producton of goods, in enhancing quality, and in reducing costs, then we will resolve our task.

[Suntsov] How should we move toward economic reform? To what extent is it possible to consider the interests of the republics that are members of the USSR?

[Grinberg] I believe that—for the conditions of the Soviet Union—one of the most painful problems is how to coordinate its economic actions on the path toward reform. For the main thing, I believe, is that we need to preserve a common economic space. [end recording]

Confirms Economic Situation

LD1603213891 Moscow TASS in English 2119 GMT 16 Mar 91

[By TASS correspondent Lyudmila Shvedova]

[Text] Moscow March 16 TASS—A meeting between President Gorbachev and leading Soviet economists ended in the Kremlin on Saturday evening. They discussed in detail for more than seven hours the social, economic and political situation. The conversation, a continuation of traditional consultations, does not have an emergency character, according to the president, despite the aggravation of crisis phenomena in society.

The meeting was attended by specialists from various regions of the country, which are living through various stages of the implementation of market relations. This is why it provided a possibility of assessing realistically the consequences of various economic measures. The economists with whom Gorbachev conferred on Saturday were unanimous in their opinion that it is necessary to create most favourable conditions for the development of production and to work out a mechanism promoting interest in the increase of the output of goods, the improvement of their quality and the reduction of production cost.

Commenting on the results of the meeting at the request of TASS, Soviet TV and radio, Soviet Prime Minister Pavlov pointed to the importance of participation in it of the independent representatives of Soviet science. He believes that the convictions, ideas and statements of people, who took part in today's meeting in the Kremlin are not identical, and they differ from his own ideas. "This is what enables us to work out a collective approach and choose an optimal way. Unanimity in such cases looks suspicious," he stressed.

Responding to the question about a possible impact of a further advance towards a market-oriented system on the socio-political situation in the country, Pavlov expressed confidence that the political situation cannot be stable in any country, if there is no economic stability there. "If a person cannot spend his wages and does not have normal living conditions, political stability is out of the question," he said. According to Pavlov, we are facing the effect of a "reverse wave": political instability is an obstacle on the way to economic stabilisation. "The majority of the population should realise that the country is living through a difficult stage of development. Perhaps, it would be reasonable to put aside for some time all political agruments and differences and to begin searching intensively for ways of resolving economic problems. In my opinion, without it the collapse of the economic and political systems will be inevitable," he said.

Assessing the economic situation in the country, Pavlov stressed that it was not improving, which is reflected in the situation in any industry and any region. "We are working hard to stabilise the situation, to overcome the crisis. It is necessary to show quickly to the people that the situation in the country can improve, that we are moving forward. On this basis it is possible to look for political solutions. But today we should realise that material production is still of priority importance...Before going in for science, art, politics and religion people have to eat, drink, dress themselves and have a dwelling...We shall tackle our problems in this succession," he said.

State Leaders Urge Miners Not To Strike

PM1803100791 Moscow PRAVDA in Russian 16 Mar 91 Second Edition p 2

["Letter in the Paper" from Central Council of Association of USSR State Industrial, Construction, and Communications Enterprises and Associations: "Whose Purpose Do Strikes Serve? To USSR Coal Industry Enterprise Labor Collectives"]

[Text] The Association of USSR State Industrial, Construction, Transport and Communications Enterprises and Associations is concerned at the situation in the coal industry.

We agree that miners have a mass of problems that retard their work and need to be solved. But strikes will do nothing but deepen the economic crisis.

It is important to ponder why—and in whose interests—you miners were so doggedly incited to strike back in 1989. Because the suspension of coal deliveries—above all to metallurgical and power engineering workers—

deals the country's economy a major, wide-ranging blow aimed at achieving its most speedy disruption. That is what happened!

Subsequent events snowballed. Metallurgical enterprises were immediately plunged into turmoil, and they are still unable to work normally. As a result the economy's metal shortfall totaled several million tonnes. Today many enterprises in all sectors are standing idle or at a total standstill for this reason.

But that is still not everything. In 1989 you not only failed to extract coal during the strikes, you were also persuaded to not even load available coal. As a result a vast quantity of rolling stock piled up on railroad tracks and increasing holdups in shipments set in. As a result, enterprises and construction sites stood idle: Southern areas of the country failed to bring in a vast quantity of fruit and vegetables from the fields, some imported grain began to rot in Black Sea ports, and fines imposed on foreign shipping companies alone for ships with imported grain standing idle for a few days totaled 35 million foreign currency rubles. All this notwithstanding our shortages!

Destructive forces exploited miners' strikes (although we are sure that you did not want or intend this) subsequently not only to start sabotage but as a diversionary tactic. The 1989 action cost the Soviet people several tens of billions of rubles.

That is why we are forced to appeal to all miners, to this progressive detachment of the USSR working class, to engineering and technical workers, to employees, to the leaders of enterprises and all coal industry collectives on behalf of USSR state enterprise labor collectives: Stop, show reason and consideration! Remember, stoppages at metallurgical enterprises and electric power stations alone—and you are to blame—will affect you yourselves above all and will result in stoppages at other enterprises and sectors. But the main result of strikes is to disrupt an already ailing economy.

We urge you to stop your strike and make good—within the shortest possible time—the 1989 coal shortfall. What is more, the USSR Association of State Enterprises and Associations urges all metallurgical enterprises and machine building, forestry, and other enterprises to take all steps to supply the coal industry with the following materials: metal, rolled metal, timber, other semimanufactures, equipment, and spare parts.

We appeal to the USSR Cabinet of Ministers: Provision of materials and equipment for USSR coal industry enterprises must be put under special control.

The association is convinced that you, Comrade Miners, will understand our disquiet at our homeland's future and will do everything to normalize work at your enterprises.

[Signed] The Central Council of USSR Industrial, Construction, and Communications State Enterprises and Associations.

Official Asks Lvov Miners to Resume Work

LD1703201491 Kiev Domestic Service in Ukrainian 1615 GMT 16 Mar 91

[Excerpt] [passage omitted] A meeting has taken place on the central square of Chervonograd, where those on strike assembled. At the meeting Mykola Horyn, deputy chairman of the Lvov Oblast Soviet of People's Deputies, read out an appeal by the oblast soviet to the miners. It says that the Lvov Oblast Soviet of People's Deputies appeals to the miners to think about the political situation in the country and in our republic, and to appraise the nature and possible consequences of the strike which they have declared. This strike, it is noted in the appeal, is not in the interests of the Ukraine and Galicia, and is not in the interests of the miners themselves. It may bring the oblast's economy to the verge of catastrophe and may leave the whole of the western region of Ukraine without power supplies and without warmth and light.

This strike, it is said in the appeal of the Lvov Oblast Soviet to the miners, has not become either an all-Union or all-republican strike. Outside the Ukrainian borders it is mainly held as a measure of support for Boris Yeltsin, chairman of the Russian Parliament. We have a completely different political situation here in Ukraine and different tasks. Your word, the appeal says, will not be heard in Moscow today, and will not produce the political effect desirable for us. Regardless of your just demands, the work stoppage will not be directed against Gorbachev and the USSR Supreme Soviet, but against the sovereignty of the Ukraine, which is being born, against the democratic transformations in our republic, and against the democratic Soviets of the Lvov oblast.

The strike, organized right after the Ukraine had taken over the coal industry, will not strengthen the republic's sovereignty and the recognition of its economic potential. The chaos will produce neither democracy, nor sovereignty, nor well-being. Only new totalitarianism can be raised on the ruins of the economy. The appeal of the Lvov Oblast Soviet to the miners of western Ukraine [word indistinct] contains a request not to let the politicians lacking perspicacity play on the sacred rules of workers' solidarity, not to drive the economy of the oblast, which is in already in a state of crisis, to a catastrophe, and not to increase the suffering of the people who are tormented by shortages.

The Lvov Oblast Soviet of People's Deputies express hope in the appeal to the miners that they will manifest political maturity and wisdom, and accept the support of the Donbass pits on strike and not completely ruin the economy of the oblast.

Mykola Horyn, deputy chairman of the Lvov Oblast Soviet of People's Deputies, having read out this appeal

to the meeting, stressed that only a part of the coal enterprises have resorted to strike in the Ukraine, and that the strike is not in the interests of the progressive forces of the Ukraine and the people. The thought starts prevailing in the strike committee and also in the work collectives about the need to resume work at the pits of the Lvov-Volhynia coal basin. Let us hope that common sense will prevail.

Karaganda Miners Deliver Ultimatum to Pavlov

PM1503165791 Moscow KOMSOMOLSKAYA PRAVDA in Russian 15 Mar 91 p 1

[Correspondent V. Komarov report under the general heading "Why Are the Miners Up In Arms?": "Karaganda"]

[Text] The Karaganda Oblast Workers' Committee has sent telegrams to coal-mining regions and Prime Minister V. Pavlov. The government is given an ultimatum: If it does not agree to talks within 36 hours, Karaganda will start a solidarity action. It will take the form of an indefinite strike.

Explanatory work is being carried out at mines. As was the case on 1 March, the collectives will have the final say.

Miners Vote No Confidence in Coal Minister

LD1803103691 Moscow All-Union Radio First Program Radio-1 Network in Russian 1000 GMT 18 Mar 91

[Text] Representatives of a group of coal mines in Khakassia have held a conference at Chernogorsk. Delegates from 19 enterprises took part in the meeting, which was also attended by Shchadov, the minister for the country's coal industry. The conference decided to support the demands of the miners who are on strike in the Kuzbass, the Donbass, and other coal mining regions in our country. It also passed a resolution expressing no confidence in USSR Coal Industry Minister Shchadov. The miners of Khakassia decided to set up a special fund of support for striking colleagues and to send them material assistance. An 11-man council was elected at the conference. Its job will be to monitor compliance with the miners' demands and, if need be, to make a decision on strike action.

Kuzbass Pit Strikes Add Political Demands

PM1703181391 Moscow IZVESTIYA in Russian 16 Mar 91 Union Edition p 2

[Viktor Kostyukovskiy report under "Direct Line" rubric: "Strike Wave Mounting"]

[Text] Novokuznetsk—The Kuzbass miners' political strike is growing in scale. By 15 March more than one-third of the basin's coal-mining enterprises had joined in.

The strikers' main general demands remain unchanged. They are: the resignation of the country's president and the union organs and the transfer of power to the Federation Council. In various cities miners are adding their own—also political—demands. For example, miners in Leninsk-Kuznetskiy are demanding a ban on the activity of all parties in organs of state power and management, state security, the army, internal affairs, production, and in the spheres of culture, education, and the mass media. This list also contains the demand for the immediate provision of a second channel on Central Television, one all-union radio program, and the necessary printing base for the creation and work of the Russian state's mass media. There is also a demand to recognize as legitimate the results of the polls conducted in the Baltic republics and other republics that decided not to take part in the 17 March referendum.

The "Raspadskaya" pit, the largest in the country, is on strike. Only those people responsible for keeping the mines in working condition have been instructed to work.

The city and oblast strike funds are being vigorously replenished with collective and individual contributions. The collective of the "Novokuznetskaya" pit is working to meet the city's needs but is regarded as on strike and has decided to contribute 30,000 rubles to just such a fund.

Strikes Threaten Power Production

LD1503165191 Moscow TASS in English 1639 GMT 15 Mar 91

[By TASS correspondent Grigoriy Shalakin]

[Text] Kemerovo, Western Siberia March 15 TASS—The strike of mineworkers put power engineering workers of Kuzbass in a critical situation. During the past two days power plants received 21,000 tonnes of coal less than is required. The limitation of electricity supply, which will have to be introduced if the strike continues, can bring about unpredictable consequences at the mines themselves, as well as at metallurgical enterprises and in the social sphere. Power engineering workers stated today that they free themselves of the responsibility for consequences of the reduction of fuel supplies.

Nevertheless, the number of striking labour collectives increased by three to reach a total of 36, the regional council of people's deputies reports. This makes about one-third of Kuzbass mines.

Coal Transportation Declines

LD1603163191 Moscow All-Union Radio Mayak Network in Russian 1500 GMT 16 Mar 91

[Text] Strikes continue to exacerbate the crisis in the economy of the Kuzbass. Today, almost half of the mines there—37 out of 76—are not working. Coal transport on the Kemerovo railway continues to decline. At

exactly noon, local time, which is 0800 Moscow time, engine drivers, wherever they were at that moment, switched on their horns for one minute. The action was supported at the transport enterprises of the Kuzbass.

Politicians Reportedly Incite Strike

PM1503132191 Moscow PRAVDA in Russian 15 Mar 91 Second Edition p 2

[Report by correspondent S. Vtorushin: "Who Is Fueling Situation"]

[Text] Kemerovo—The alarming situation which has taken shape in the Kuzbass can be felt at every step. The miners' strike is beginning increasingly to affect many labor collectives. Because of the reduction in the production of coke the production of pig iron in the oblast has declined 7.1 percent since the beginning of the year while steel production has declined 8.8 percent and finished rolled metal production 5.7 percent.

The strike has put a number of the country's largest enterprises in a critical position. In the Kuzbass itself they are talking about the need to elaborate a plan for stopping the Novokuznetsk and West Siberian metallurgical combines. If mass stoppages of metallurgical and other enterprises begin then tens if not hundreds of thousands of people will be left without wages. And what about the miners?

On Wednesday 13 March there were 12 mines not working in the basin. The council of Kuzbass workers committees issued an appeal to the labor collectives. It voiced full support for the continuing strike.

Why are passions being fueled—after all, all this is striking primarily the ordinary people, including the miners themselves? I put this question to V. Golikov, chairman of the council of Kuzbass workers committees.

"The workers had no choice," he said. "The strike is the only way of achieving the fulfillment of our demands."

To expand the dimensions of the strike pickets have appeared at a number of mines. On 13 March at the "Kiselevskaya" and 26th Party Congress mines they prevented the shifts from descending into the mines. Matters reached the point of open clashes. The miners nonetheless got down to the coal face but neither mine produced any coal.

Several deputies assumed the unseemly role of inciters to the strike. Thus, RSFSR [Russian Soviet Federated Socialist Republic] People's Deputy B. Denisenko, the republic's deputy health minister, having abandoned her concern for people's health, flew specially from Moscow to Novokuznetsk to urge people to strike. It must be admitted that at some mines she succeeded in doing this.

Great activity in expanding the strike was displayed by the leaders of the council of Kuzbass workers committees, V. Golikov and A. Aslanidi, who are people's deputies of the oblast soviet. Despite the fact that the oblast soviet session had expressed itself unequivocally against the strike.

"Who could stop the strike?" I asked A. Tuleyev, chairman of the Kemerovo Oblast Soviet of People's Deputies.

"B. Yeltsin could do it," he replied. "The chairman of the RSFSR Supreme Soviet could thank the miners for their support and ask them to go to work. I put this precise proposal to him. But in response I received a telegram certified by V. Ilyushin, chief of the RSFSR Supreme Soviet secretariat. He mentions a report on B. Yeltsin's meeting with representatives of the Kuzbass workers committees published in ROSSIYSKAYA GAZETA. It says literally the following: 'In answering a question about his attitude toward the continuing strikes B.N. Yeltsin stressed that the decision on the choice of forms of defending their interests is a matter for the labor collectives themselves.'"

There is no point in commenting on this statement.

The strike continued Thursday. In particular the miners of eight of the nine mines in Leninsk-Kuznetsk refused to go down to the coal face while five mines in Prokopyevsk announced a strike. In the past three days alone coal losses have been over 70,000 tonnes.

Strikes Continue in Ukraine Coal Mines

LD1503133491 Kiev International Service in English 0000 GMT 15 Mar 91

[Text] The coal mines in Novovolynsk which are part of the production association ceased to extract coal. The miners demand that their wages be increased and pension law improved. They also demand that the declaration on Ukraine's sovereignty be granted the status of law.

Representatives of the strike committees in the cities of the Donetsk coal basin came out in support of the strike which got under way on March 1. The resolution contains an appeal to all the work collectives of the USSR to support the demands of the miners on wage indexing, due to growing cost of living.

Five out of the eight coal mines of the Pervomayskugol coal extracting association which went on strike on March 1 still refuse to get down to work. The demands are of an economic nature. Meanwhile the strike has a strong negative impact on the economy as a whole. In Lugansk region alone the miners decreased coal production by 50,000 tonnes.

Vorkuta Group Discussing Tactics

LD1603215691 Moscow TASS in English 2146 GMT 16 Mar 91

[By TASS correspondent Viktor Makarov]

[Text] Vorkuta March 17 TASS—The striking miners of Vorkuta, a city beyond the Arctic Circle, are getting prepared for a general conference of representatives of labour collectives of mines and other enterprises of the coal industry of the region, which is scheduled for next Monday. They will discuss whether or not they will continue the strike, as well as ways and methods of the future struggle for the meeting of the demands, put forward by the strikers.

Five out of 13 mines of the coal field are fully on strike and two—on a partial basis. The Vorkutaugol amalgamation reduced output in March by 180,000 tonnes, which strongly affected consumers.

A round-the-clock vigil of groups of specialists was organised at all the striking mines of the Vorkuta region in order to prevent emergency situations on Sunday—the day of the countrywide and republican referendums. Special groups were organized at the Vorshagorskaya mine, the largest in the region, in order not to let strange people penetrate the mine's territory.

A delegation of Vorkuta miners is still in Moscow. It has failed to meet Prime Minister Pavlov so far. He said that the termination of the strike was an indispensable condition for the meeting.

Work Resumes at 1 Vorkuta Mine

LD.703173291 Moscow TASS in English 1652 GMT 17 Mar 91

[By TASS correspondent Viktor Makarov]

[Text] Vorkuta March 17 TASS—The work collective of the Zapolyarnaya colliery in Vorkuta has decided to act to get their economic demands fulfilled without resorting to strikes, an extreme means by all counts.

Work has restarted at the mine.

Four other collieries and part of the Vorkutinskaya mine work collective continue their strikes. None of these collieries and the Promyshlennaya mine are now shipping their coal to consumers.

In addition, according to a decision of the strike coordinating committee, several mines provide fuel only for their city, Vorkuta.

On Monday, the presidium of the Vorkuta City Council plans to hold an extended meeting with the participation of representatives of coal industrial enterprises' work collectives and leaders, trade unions, workers' committees and activists of the workers' movement.

The meeting is expected to focus on what is to be done next—continue or stop the strike. Soviet people's deputies elected in miners' towns, the leaders of the city council, the city Communist Party Committee and work collectives' councils appeared on local television on Saturday. They called upon miners to rationally assess the situation, take into consideration all circumstances and think of continuing the struggle for the fulfillment of their demands without resorting to strikes as the extreme measure.

Donbass Miners Add Political Demands

PM1503150991 Moscow PRAVDA in Russian 15 Mar 91 Second Edition p 6

[UKRINFORM-TASS report: "Miners Have Gone Out Onto Square"]

[Text] Donetsk, 14 Mar—To the economic demands of the miners, who have been striking for two weeks now, have been added political demands, on whose inclusion in the resolution of the regional union of Donbass strike committees the individual strike committee leaders have insisted. Today on the square in front of the oblast soviet building a meeting took place, permission for which the Donetsk City Soviet was obliged to give in violation of the law, yielding to pressure from the city workers (strike) committee.

Several hundred miners from the "Oktyabrskoye" mining administration, making up the majority of the meeting's participants, came here with posters setting out the strikers' demands: the abolition of the USSR Supreme Soviet as an institution of legislative power, political and economic sovereignty for the Ukraine, and the ending of any deductions for the center. The question of increasing wages for miners was mentioned only a few times during the entire meeting by the demonstrators on the square.

Meanwhile the situation remains unchanged from yesterday: As before of the oblast's 122 mines there are nine enterprises which are not working at all or only working partially.

West Donbass Mines Suspend Strike

PM1503164791 Moscow IZVESTIYA in Russian 15 Mar 91 Union Edition p 2

[Viktor Filippov report under the rubric "Direct Link": "Strike Suspended"]

[Text] Pavlograd—Western Donbass miners have suspended the strike which began 5 March. Of the "Pavlogradugol" Association's 11 mines just one is not working—the "Space Heroes" Mine.

The lull is accounted for by the fact that the miners are awaiting news from their delegations sent to Kiev and Moscow to ascertain the position of the republic and Union governments. There are no representatives of the "Space Heroes" Mine in these delegations. In the opinion of its strike committee, the leadership of the Ukraine and of the country has had more than enough time to fulfill the miners' demands.

"The management has stepped up pressure on the strike organizers," tunneler A. Grigoryev, one of the leaders of the workers committee of Western Donbass miners,

reported. "The chairman of the strike committee was summoned to the oblast court. I was invited to the prosecutor's office, where I had to prove the legality and correctness of our actions. So far no sanctions have ensued. The situation is tense. A strike explosion is inevitable if the leaders of the republic and the country refuse to talk with us. Unfortunately, a negative response has been received from Kiev."

Strike Affects Donetsk Railroad Workers

PM1503150791 Moscow Central Television First Program Network in Russian 1800 GMT 12 Mar 91

[Report by correspondent Ye. Kondaurov on the strike situation in the Donbass, date not given; from the "Vremya" newscast]

[Text] [Kondaurov] Throughout the Donbass 22 mines are taking part in the strike today to some extent or another. Although the overwhelming majority of mines are working, coal extraction and shipments to consumers have dropped sharply. Losses over the past weeks total 350,000 tonnes of fuel. The shortages of coal at coking and chemical enterprises and power stations are threatening to halt production units.

The miners' main demands are higher pay and a broadening of the range of underground jobs carrying entitlement to a preferential pension. These demands are very understandable to workers in other sectors in the Donbass, but many of them do not agree with the strike. It is inflicting losses on related sectors.

Probably the worst hit are railroad workers. They have been deprived of work without their own doing, since coal is the main freight on the Donetsk Railroad. They have lost 75,000 rubles [R] in pay over the past two weeks. Today, at the call of workers' committees, a meeting of railroad workers was held in Krasnoarmeysk, in the square in front of the railroad station. While supporting the miners' demands in general, the railroad workers talked about the losses which they have sustained as a result of the strike, and about how difficult life is for their families. The discussion that ensued was very heated.

[S.G. Bratok, drifter] We are earning a miserable wage, we are being paid in kopeks for what we do. We get R250 for our work, for risking our lives.

[N.S. Belousov, railroad foreman] We are all in the same boat. Especially here in the Donbass. When there is no coal, there is no money. Neither for us, nor the miners.

[Unidentified speaker] Krasnoarmeysk Depot railroad workers have lost R518,000 during the 12 days 1 through 12 March, and we demand that the miners compensate the railroad workers for the losses. If the strike continues, the losses will continue to grow.

[Kondaurov] Meetings are taking place at mines today. Strike committees are sitting. There is just one question: What is to be done now? Should the strike continue, or should it be called off? A compromise is possible, according to what many miners told us. However, both the strikers and those to whom their demands are addressed must meet each other halfway.

Tyumen Oilmen Threaten To Hold Oil and Gas

PM1503144391 Moscow Central Television First Program Network in Russian 0600 GMT 12 Mar 91

[From the "Business Courier" Program: Announcer-read report]

[Text] Various regions of the country are failing to meet their food delivery commitments to Tyumen Oblast. At the same time the plan for the extraction of oil is being fulfilled in western Siberia.

The leaders of the aforesaid regions have been invited to Tyumen in March to discuss the principles of further cooperation. If food delivery commitments are not met, Siberian oil workers intend to restrict deliveries of oil and gas to unreliable partners.

Observer Sees U.S. Interference in Strikes

LD1603181591 Moscow Central Television Second Program and Dubi Networks in Russian 1530 GMT 16 Mar 91

[Commentary by political observer D. Biryukov; from the "Vremya" newscast—read by Biryukov]

[Text] I would be going against my conscience if I tried to pretend that the difficult life our miners lead today is devoid of acute, painful, and unresolved problems. It goes without saying that highly placed authorities could have honored their promises earlier, but, alas, the miners themselves have violated important points in previous agreements and are doing so now. Be that as it may, in today's economic situation, strikes are too destructive a weapon. Roughly 1.2 million tons of coal has been lost during the recent wave of strikes alone. These figures have been updated to the end of this week. Expressed in purely financial terms, the losses amount to almost R140 million, and the losses arising from production stoppages at enterprises are 10 times as great. By the way, the miners themselves have already lost over r30 million in wages. These figures are impressive. What's more, according to the trade unions, 8-10 percent mines in various basins have been on continuous strike over the last few days.

Now, the miners are being urged to escalate strikes and to replace economic demands with political demands, ones that are manifestly unrealizable. The calls are coming from people for whom the miners' interests are only a stake in the struggle for achieving their own political ambitions.

I spent many years working in Poland. Certain aspects of the present situation remind me very much of the early

1980s, when Solidarity was campaigning to win influence over the miners. There is another similarity. The American federation of Labour and Congress of Industrial Organizations (AFL-CIO], then and now, consider themselves entitled to interfere in other people's affairs. AFL-CIO President Lane Kirkland wrote to an organization known as the Independent Miners Union. He promised the Soviet miners assistance of a similar kind and on a similar scale as the assistance given to Solidarity during the 1980s. At that time, printing and duplicating equipment, fax machines, and other equipment, worth roughly $5 million, was delivered for the purpose of disseminating propaganda material. Such assistance is reminiscent of interference in the internal affairs of another country.

There are some other facts that give food for thought. When the miners gathered in Donbass for their congresses, they were visited by the first secretary and, then later, the second secretary of the U.S. Embassy. Both congresses were attended by a certain (Dammer), head of a special fund set up to encourage new political movements in East Europe. Delegations claiming to speak on behalf of Soviet miners have twice visited the United States. But, the final decision on the membership of these delegations was taken at the U.S. Embassy in Moscow.

When you gather these seemingly disparate facts, you feel sorry for those people who really do live and work under difficult conditions and whose just demands are being manipulated, for their own purposes, by people who have unsatisfied political ambitions.

The other day, the presidential palace in Warsaw, occupied by the founder and leader of Solidarity, who came to power on the shoulders of the miners, among others, was visited by representatives of Poland's coal mining areas. They demanded an improvement in their desperate plight. This is 1991, not 1981, don't forget. I remember now how fine the calls were at that time for political strikes and the promises to improve life after the new politicians won power.

Baltic Republics

Union Referendum Voting in Baltics Reported

Early Voting Reviewed

LD1603211491 Moscow Central Television First Program Network in Russian 1800 GMT 16 Mar 91

[From the "Vremya" newscast]

[Text] Work collectives and public organizations in the Baltic republics and in Moldova took upon themselves the task of organizing and holding the referendum. So, what is the situation there today?

[Begin recording] [Correspondent B. Ternoushko] Voting at polling stations lasted till late evening. There are 434 polling stations altogether, and they are situated mainly in major Lithuanian towns. Over 100,000 people have visited them already, but there are many more who would like to express their attitudes to the country's future and their own fate. So, what is preventing them from doing so? The main reason, according to participants of the Democratic Forces Congress, which has opened in the capital, is tough pressure exerted by official Vilnius. The local press published a statement by the Lithuanian Supreme Soviet, signed by Landsbergis, which in fact declares illegal both the referendum itself and those who are holding it. A deputy group of the USSR Supreme Soviet, which arrived in Vilnius, has also been here.

[Yu.I.Borodin, head of a deputy group of the USSR Supreme Soviet and academician of the USSR Academy of Medical Sciences] Moods are very diverse here. The mosaic of moods is very complex, and we are perfectly aware of this. We would not like to be treated as some kind of envoys of the center which seeks to arrange the political situation in favor of the center. That is not so. We are here to provide an opportunity to people to have their say. The referendum started here yesterday, on the 14th [as heard]. We have not noticed any signs of any political pressure whatsoever on the part of any organizations, let us say the CPSU. Much has been said about this. We have noticed nothing of the kind. There is only one desire—to carry out the necessary preparations so this referendum can take place. The referendum has already started here and it is currently under way.

[Ternoushko] One more point. Rumors, like the morning mist, are spreading in Vilnius that combat groups are pulling their forces together and that provocations are being prepared for 17 March. I would not have mentioned this, but for the following fact: Yesterday, at 0520, an explosion took place near the military commandants' office. This is a fact one cannot keep quite about. [end recording]

Latva Polling Stations Disrupted

LD1803005891 Moscow Central Television First Program Network in Russian 2128 GMT 17 Mar 91

[Report by correspondent Frolov in Riga, from the "Television News Service" program]

[Text] [Frolov] By the decision of local bodies of power and administration of a number of organizations and establlishments, 23 polling stations were thrown out of the premises they formerly occupied. Their work was organized in tents, buses, and trailers. The Presidium of the Soviet of Deputies of the Vidzeme suburb of Riga, the former Proletarskiy rayon, forbade all establishments under its jurisdiction to take part in holding the referendum. The executive committee was also forbidden to give out lists of inhabitants to the ward referendum electoral commission. Disciplinary measures have been instituted for violating this decision. J. Janovskis, the Latvian minister of transport, forbade locating two referendum polling stations in the Riga bus association club.

In the town of Kuldiga observers from the Latvian People's Front compiled lists of those coming to vote at the referendum polling stations.

[Announcer] Nevertheless, in spite of this situation, about 100,000 people took part in the voting. The local electoral commissions have started counting the votes.

Voters Overcome Obstacles

LD1703072891 Moscow TASS in English 0718 GMT 17 Mar 91

[By TASS correspondent Valeriy Zaytsev]

[Text] Riga March 17 TASS—About 100,000 people have already cast their votes by this morning in an all-Union referendum in Latvia where 322 polling stations had been open three days before the announced referendum date.

The Latvian parliament held aloof from referendum arrangements which were actually made by work collectives and public organisations. Unlike the all-Latvian opinion poll taken two weeks ago, Soviet army servicemen are taking part in today's referendum polling.

The polling is being monitored not only by representatives of public organisations and movements but also by people's deputies of the USSR. During the first day of deputies' stay in the republic, there came reports that through the fault of local authorities and directors of some factories there had been irregularities in the holding of the referendum: polling stations were closed down or relocated and referendum commissions were not allowed to lease premises.

All these facts will be brought to the notice of the central referendum commission and law enforcement agencies of the USSR, said Albert Shamikhin, people's deputy of the USSR.

The procurator's office of Latvia has already sent several official warnings to a number of officials that they would be held responsible for any breaches of the law "on a countrywide polling (referendum) in the USSR".

Lithuanians Vote Despite Obstacles

LD1703212291 Moscow Central Television First Program Network in Russian 1800 GMT 17 Mar 91

[From the "Vremya" newscast]

[Text] More than 250,000 people had visited the polling stations of Lithuania by midday. In the rayon of Salcininkai, 80 percent of the voters have already cast their vote. All of this in spite of the official ban on the referendum. In the small picturesque town of Grigiskes the electoral commission, evicted from the club, worked for many hours out in the open. Some of the polling stations in rural areas had to be set up in vehicles. In Vilnius people from other towns deprived of a place to vote gathered at military units, and it would appear that only the soldiers and officers of the local garrison had normal conditions in which to express their views on the future of the country. [Video shows civilians and soldiers voting, then cuts to the following interviews at polling station]

[Begin recording] [USSR People's Deputy V.I.Fedotova] Our colleagues visited Novovilniusskiy Rayon, we visited Salcininkai, we visited Snieckus, we visited the city of Vilnius. We see that people are in a combative mood; they want very much to take part in the referendum. They consider themselves the people of a great country and are taking part in the events of that state.

[Academician Yu.A.Borodin, leader of USSR Supreme Soviet deputies' group] We saw scenes where people were even traveling from one rayon to another rayon so that they could take part in the poll. Incidentally there were people among them of various nationalities and ages. [end recording]

Estonia Polling Stations Reported

LD1703233491 Moscow TASS International Service in Russian 1810 GMT 17 Mar 91

[Text] Tallinn, 17 Mar (ETA-TASS)—During voting in northeastern Estonia, where the town soviets of Narva, Kohtla- Jaerve, and Sillamae decided to hold the USSR referendum, by 1600 hours, 42 percent of the electorate had voted in Kohtla-Jaerve, 75 percent in Sillamae, and 58 percent in Narva.

The town soviet of Kivioli, which is under the administrative jurisdiction of Kohtla-Jarve, decided on the eve of the referendum not to participate. Polling stations there were closed today. The local soviet in the settlement of Azeri also decided not to hold the referendum, so those who wished to do so, and they numbered around 1,000, voted at the border post after servicemen.

A special polling station for nontownspeople was organized in Sillamae. People on tours of duty and those on holiday at sanatoria and rest homes in Narva-Yvessuu [words indistinct] as well as people from [name indistinct] district, where the all-Union referendum is not being held, voted there. A group of USSR Supreme Soviet deputies observered voting in northeastern Estonia.

It is more difficult to tell how the referendum went in other parts of Estonia since constituencies were based around production sites. Polling stations were set up in Tallinn, Tartu, Pyarnu, and other towns and population points in Estonia. Most of them were at all-Union jurisdiction works, workers hostels, officers' buildings at garrisons, and Russian-language schools.

A total of 86 polling stations are open to voters today. According to Aleksandr Nazirov, chairman of the polling station at the Tallin naval officers' building, by 1300 hours around 2,000 people had voted there. He hopes that by 2000 the number will reach 3,000. A delegation of Canadian legislators who are on a two-day visit to Estonia witnessed the progress of voting here today.

Lithuania Reports Planned Military Build-up

LD1503230691 Vilnius Radio Vilnius in Lithuanian 1300 GMT 15 Mar 91

[Text] A report by the Defense Department concerning the situation in Lithuania, signed by its general director, Audrius Butkevicius, was disseminated today at a briefing held at the Lithuanian Republic Supreme Council building.

The report notes: In recent days, contingents of the Soviet Union's armed forces are being increased within the republic. Two-hundred individuals have been transferred from Leningrad to Military Unit 41610, stationed in Klaipeda. On 10 March, an additional 800 soldiers, from [name indistinct] in the Kaliningrad region joined that same unit. Plans exist to staff, to full capacity, the 107th Division stationed at Severniy Gorodok, the Soviet armed forces base in Vilnius.

An order has been received from General Varennikov, chief of USSR ground forces, to complete staffing of the 64th Motorized Riflemen's Regiment, based in Karmelava. The 77th Motorized Riflemen's Regiment is being augmented by individual troop additions.

The redeployment of USSR armed forces is not being coordinated with the Lithuanian Republic Government and the responsible services of the Lithuanian Republic.

The movements of armored equipment along city streets and main highways, and their choice of a permanent route past the Lithuanian Republic Supreme Council

building, are of a clearly provocative nature, and are an expression of psychological terror directed against the Republic of Lithuania, the report states.

The special services of the Soviet Union armed forces carry out diversional activities and search civilian residents on city strets, while drunken soldiers attack people, rob them, and frequently wound them.

An OMON [special purpose militia unit] of armed individuals, previously belonging to the Lithuanian Republic Ministry of Internal Affairs, and supported by Soviet Union armed forces, is active. Individuals, belonging to OMON illegally apprehend civilian individuals, search them, and rob them of their belongings. Police staff members of the Lithuanian Republic are stopped and disarmed. For example, on 11 March, four policemen were disarmed and detained. On 3 March, the Lithuanian Republic Internal Ministry weapons' warehouse and ammunition were seized.

The Defense Department has also received information concerning other provocations being organized by Soviet Union special forces and Soviet Union armed forces representatives, which aim to discredit the state institutions of the Lithuanian Republic, to form a negative opinion concerning the Lithuanian Republic within the Soviet Union and Western states, to augment economic choas, criminal activity, and political instability in Lithuania, and to disrupt the activity of police structures.

An organized campaign is being spread against the Republic of Lithuania. Efforts are under way to create an appearance of the processes ongoing in Lithuania as justifying a [word indistinct] sanctions against the Republic of Lithuania.

Secretary of State Baker Meets Baltic Envoys

LD1603100491 Moscow TASS International Service in Russian 0923 GMT 16 Mar 91

[By TASS correspondent Mikhail Ivanov]

[Text] Moscow, 16 Mar (TASS)—The conversation between U.S. Secretary of State James Baker and the permanent Moscow representatives of the three Baltic republics was "concrete" and "pragmatic," and dealt mainly with the prospects for talks between the Union government and the Baltic republics. That was how Janis Peters, the Latvian permanent representative, described the essence of today's hour-long conversation.

It seemed to the journalists awaiting the end of the meeting that the Baltic representatives looked upset. "Are you not optimistic after the meeting?" a TV correspondent for one of the Western countries asked the Latvian permanent representative.

"The meeting was pragmatic," he repeated. "At the moment, I do not want to plunge into euphoria. I think the Soviet Union and the United States are conducting a good dialogue now, and the Baltic area will gain from that as well."

The meeting between Secretary of State James Baker, who is visiting the USSR, and the Baltic representatives, took place at the U.S. ambassador's residence, Spaso House.

Baltic Representatives Listed

LD1603083791 Moscow TASS in English 0756 GMT 16 Mar 91

[By TASS correspondent Mikhail Ivanov]

[Text] Moscow March 16 TASS—U.S. Secretary of State James Baker began a meeting with permanent representatives of the three Baltic republics in Moscow at the U.S. ambassador's residence in Moscow this morning.

These representatives are Egidijus Bickauskas (Lithuania), Janis Peters (Latvia) and Yuriy Kahn (Estonia). The meeting is also being attended by Endel Lippmaa, Estonian minister without portfolio on eastern affairs.

A senior American representative told TASS that the aim of the meeting is Baker's familiarisation with the opinion of the Baltic representatives.

Tallinn Comments on Visit

LD1403120291 Tallinn Domestic Service in Estonian 1000 GMT 14 Mar 91

[Peter Kaldre commentary]

[Excerpts] It has been announced in advance that during Baker's talks in Moscow, the key issues will be those connected with the Middle East. Yet James Baker's visit is in various ways connected with the Baltic issue, too. According to what Radio Liberty said this morning, Baker will meet Estonian, Latvian, and Lithuanian representatives on Saturday morning, precisely who is not known as yet. But the fact itself is eloquent. What is also eloquent is that the day before - on Friday - Baker will meet Russia's leader Boris Yeltsin and representatives of 11 other republics. The fact that Baker will devote a separate meeting to the Baltic demonstrates that he does not recognize those republics as part of the USSR. Or, to put it more mildly, he will thus highlight their special status. [passage omitted]

Naturally, the United States now holds the trump cards. Being the state which won the war, it can also allow itself more in its relations with the USSR. It would be hard to believe, though, that in respect of the Baltic issue, for example, there could be a considerable shift. [passage omitted]

For the time being, it seems that Bush still trusts Gorbachev. Baker's visit to Moscow—and his meeting with

Baltic representatives on Saturday morning in particular—will have to demonstrate how great that trust actually is. Will the United States again limit itself to the need to emphasize the fact of beginning talks with Moscow, or will Baker have more to say?

Pugo Receives Lithuanian Representatives

LD1603224391 Vilnius Radio Vilnius in Lithuanian 2100 GMT 16 Mar 91

[Text] Zigmas Vaisvila, deputy prime minister of the Republic of Lithuania, and Egidijus Bickauskas, permanent representative of the Lithuanian government in Moscow, were received today in Moscow by USSR minister of Internal Affairs Boris Pugo.

ELTA reports that the meeting was attended by Nikolay Demidov, USSR deputy minister of internal affairs. [words indistinct] relations and problems between the Lithuanian Ministry of Internal Affairs and the USSR Ministry of Internal Affairs and also [words indistinct] actual questions, whose solution demands bilateral agreement and good will.

They discussed the activities of the USSR Interior Ministry Special Designation Militia Unit, the return of seized arms, material and technical maintenance, payment of pensions, foreign passports, possible and necessary cooperation ways and means, and the return of the buildings seized in Vilnius.

The sides agreed that the situation, whereby the Soviet Interior Ministry is in control of the Lithuanian Republic Television and Radio Building and the Television Tower seized by the Soviet army, is not normal. Opinions have been exchanged regarding possible solutions to the question.

In discussing questions of cooperation between the Lithuanian Republic and the Soviet Interior ministry, Boris Pugo emphasized that the establishment in Lithuania of alternative militia structures and an analogous situation within the procuracy is intolerable and undesirable for Lithuania and the Soviet Union alike.

The sides asserted that Lithuanian Republic and the Soviet Internal Affairs work groups must begin to work on the solution of specific and urgent questions and prepare proposals for bilateral consultations, without waiting for the start of official interstate negotiations.

It was agreed to form consultational work groups to solve various contentious and vital questions as soon as possible.

Zigmas Vaisvila returned to Vilnius the same day.

Landsbergis Reports Charges Filed Against Pugo

LD1703144591 Moscow TASS International Service in Russian 1354 GMT 17 Mar 91

[By TASS correspondent Kazis Uscila]

[Text] Vilnius, 17 Mar (TASS)—"The General Procurary of the Lithuanian Republic has commenced criminal procedures against USSR Minister of Internal Affairs Boris Pugo," Vytautas Landsbergis, chairman of the Lithuanian Supreme Soviet said in an interview broadcast this morning on the "Radio of the Independent Lithuania."

According to the head of the Lithuanian legislature, the USSR minister of internal affairs is being prosecuted for the fact that "troops under his command maintain control of somebody else's sights." Landsbergis means the premises of the Lithuanian radio and television, the Vilnius television tower, the press house, and a number of other sights that were occupied by servicemen 11-13 January.

The chairman of the Lithuanian Supreme Soviet also asserted that "there has of late been a sharp increase in the number of military contingents in Lithuania and that "the army is being brought in not only to vote in the referendum."

Shlyaga Meets With Baltic Fleet Commanders

PM1803093991 Moscow KRASNAYA ZVEZDA in Russian 15 Mar 91 First Edition p 3

[Captain Second Rank V. Gromak report: "Meetings in the Baltic Fleet"]

[Text] These days, Colonel General N. Shlyaga, chief of the Soviet Army and Navy Main Political Directorate, is in the Baltic Fleet.

Col. Gen. N. Shlyaga held a meeting in the Baltic House of Officers 18 March with the fleet's ruling command and political personnel and Communists. In his speech he outlined the country's social and political situation and the conditions in which party organizations work, reported on the progress of military reforms, and answered numerous questions from the participants.

The meeting was attended by Admiral V. Ivanov, USSR people's deputy and fleet commander, and Admiral V. Panin, member of the Military Council and chief of the Navy Political Directorate.

The fleet party conference began work 14 March. N. Shlyaga will participate in this work, as will CPSU Central Committee Politburo Members M. Burokevicius, first secretary of the Lithuanian Communist Party Central Committee, A. Rubiks, first secretary of the Latvian Communist Party Central Committee, and L. Annus, first secretary of the Estonian Communist Party Central Committee.

Latvia's Gorbunovs Phones Yeltsin

LD1503201891 Riga Domestic Service in Latvian 1830 GMT 15 Mar 91

[Text] Anatolijs Gorbunovs, chairman of the Presidium of the Supreme Council of the Republic of Latvia, held a

telephone conversation today with Boris Yeltsin, chairman of the Supreme Soviet of the Russian Soviet Federated Socialist Republic.

During the conversation, Yeltsin expressed satisfaction with the resolution adopted on 13 March by the Supreme Council of the Republic of Latvia, in which trust in the democratic strivings of the Russian legislature is confirmed and the principled position of Yeltsin supported.

Boris Yeltsin once again confirmed his consistent stance with regard to the Baltic states' strivings for independence, and testified that this position would be unchanged should political complications arise.

Talking about the situation in the Russian legislature, Yeltsin remarked that a major political struggle is taking place at present. Counterforces are endeavoring to influence every Supreme Soviet deputy. Touching on the Russian Congress of Deputies, Yeltsin said he is not getting ready to justify himself, but to express once more his principled position on the procedure of reforms in the Soviet Union.

Gorbunovs Cited on Support for Yeltsin

LD1503165991 Riga Domestic Service in Latvian 0530 GMT 15 Mar 91

[Excerpt] As we have already reported, the republican legislature yesterday discussed its attitude to the activity of the democratic movement in Russia and support for Boris Yeltsin, chairman of the Supreme Council of the Russian Federation. In this connection it also adopted a special resolution of support. Here is an excerpt of what Supreme Council Chairman Anatolijs Gorbunovs said at this sitting.

[begin Gorbunovs recording] In practice, the proposed question is whether to continue to stand for a Union of independent states, or to go further the process begun by Ukraine, Kazakhstan, and Russia. It must be considered whether this process will be undisturbed in the Baltic states, where we stand for the restoration of an independent and democratic state and for the juridical recognition of our declaration of independence. I personally think that actual independence can indeed be gradually achieved by accepting concrete agreement on every problem. On the other hand, we could stay with what the USSR president has declared: only a united, indivisible state. It is hard for me to analyze the arguments that have been put forward, because it turns out that all the problems that have been created for us have been created by the democratic movements and the republics' national strivings, not by this united state. A policy that has existed until now, and also, in relation to the economy, the socialist system as it is. I think that to reconstruct or renew that is simply not possible, especially when you listen to the propaganda speeches that we are hearing on the "Vremya" program every evening.

Concerning our attitude toward the Russian legislature and Yeltsin: I personally formulate them, at least for my own understanding, in a very simple way: Latvia wants its own state, an independent state, and Russia wants the same. There are several attitudes, however, to the strivings for Latvian independence and the strivings for Russian independence, it seems to me. That is understandable, because Latvia's economic (?assets), Latvia's potential, is, as I understand it, small. Second, Latvia itself cannot defend itself as Russia could do with its economic potential, its human potential, and so on. That is why just now, I think, there is this hard struggle to decide what road Russia will continue on. In this hard struggle, obviously, we have to have our own principles and also our own stance.

Here my personal principle is to some extent simple. If we ourselves want an independent state, then we also have to support any republic of the USSR that also wants to form an independent state, Russia all the more so. As regards Yeltsin's strivings, and I would even say the strivings of Yelsin and his sympathizers, in the Russian legislature to support the Baltic states, this is not a political game that is heard here often from this restrum, too, and especially in the press—it is not a political game. Yes, but at the same time one must understand that support for Latvia is linked not only to the formula that Latvia wants an independent state and Russia does too, but also to the fact that a large number of Russian speakers, and indeed also people of Russian nationality, a large number, live in Latvia. I think we must analyze what form this support will take. If we analyze the same agreement that Mr. Alekseyev analyzed here, then I at least can conclude that this support will be considered on legal and democratic principles—this relation has to be formed in Latvia with other nationalities, Russian speakers, among them people of Russian nationality too. I agree fully that only by realizing these principles can Latvia live as an independent state. That is right, and this idea is also included in this agreement, the agreement between Russia and Latvia. [passage omitted]

Latvia's Godmanis Rejects Assistance Demand

LD1403113391 Riga Domestic Service in Russian 1850 GMT 13 Mar 91

[Text] Today, opening a scheduled session of the Council of Ministers, Premier Ivars Godmanis acquainted the government with the questions discussed by the USSR Cabinet of Ministers. He said that in connection with the expected price increases in the Soviet Union, a mutual assistance fund had been set up, into which the Republic of Latvia would have contributed 2.2 billion rubles [R] without receiving anything in exchange. We cannot agree to such a payment, since in that case we would be forced to accept also the price reform of the USSR, the price levels established in it and the amount of compensation, said Godmanis. The compensation we are already paying exceeds that being planned in the Union. Apart from that, if this R2.2 billion is paid from the republic's internal reserves, then we will have to abandon the planned indexation of incomes of the population.

According to the calculations made by the prime minister, the Soviet Union would like to receive contributions this year from Latvian to the all-Union budget amounting to more than the entire planned budget of the republic.

Proceedings of Lithuanian Supreme Soviet Session

PM1503101191 Moscow IZVESTIYA in Russian 13 Mar 91 Union Edition p 2

[Nikolay Lashkevich report under "Direct Link" rubric: "One Year On. What Now?"]

[Text] Vilnius—The Third Session of the Lithuanian Republic's Supreme Soviet has opened in Vilnius.

One year has gone by since the Lithuanian parliament announced the restoration of the independent Lithuanian state late in the evening of 11 March. Has real independence been secured? With what political and economic baggage has Lithuania approached this date? Deputies tried to give meaning to these and other topical questions of the republic's political life at the latest session, whose opening was specially timed to coincide with the anniversary.

In point of fact, however, there was no serious analysis of the republic's problems or of the results of its development over the past year or forecasts for the future (except, perhaps, for the speeches by the Supreme Soviet chairman and the prime minister). Although certain deputies did have small glimmers of hope in a change of political course—albeit an insignificant one—concerning the new stage in the activity of parliament.

This can probably be accounted for by the ceremonial, "jubilee" nature of the sitting. Thus, during the first day of the session V. Landsbergis was presented with the Norwegian "People's Peace Prize," whose conferment was described by a spokesman for the Norwegian public delegation which has come to Vilnius as a mark of solidarity with the peoples of the Baltic, not as an act of protest.

Landsbergis' speech at the opening of the session was a commentary-review of the path traveled by Lithuania in a year. He held the USSR entirely responsible for the constant fueling of tension. Criticism was leveled at "doubters" and "skeptics" who campaign for a more consistent and longer path toward independence. "We have crossed the Rubicon... And there is no going back," Landsbergis declared firmly, referring to the powers of the people who have unswervingly championed, in his opinion, the ideas of the restoration of the state's independence.

To judge from the words spoken later at a news conference, he sees a compromise way out of the deepening crisis in relations between Lithuania and the USSR in "the Soviet leadership's finding a correct, constructive solution." The Supreme Soviet chairman replied with generalities to a question put by IZVESTIYA's correspondent, who asked him to specify just what solution Lithuania expects from the Soviet Union. The USSR must allegedly dissociate itself from the Stalinist legacy—ideological, it is to be supposed—and really display elements of the new thinking, including in its policy toward Lithuania.

G. Vagnorius, the new prime minister, takes a more cautious and pragmatic position. He delivered a speech that could be called a policy speech—it was so serious, businesslike, and conceptual, despite the whole ceremonial nature of the sitting. He named the Soviet Union as one of the main economic partners, emphasizing here the importance of the consistent development of bilateral economic ties.

And so, the Third Lithuanian Supreme Soviet Session has begun. The ideological principles and political positions remain as before. The confrontation between the republic and the Union continues and seems to be gaining momentum as the all-union referendum draws near.

What now?

Lithuanian Communist Party Makes Cadre Changes

LD1403050791 Vilnius Radio Vilnius in Lithuanian 1400 GMT 13 Mar 91

[Text] According to our information, an essential change of cadres was made at the sitting of the bureau of the Central Committee of the Lithuanian Communist Party, that took place on 12 March.

Colonel Kasperavicius was appointed head of the organizational department; Colonel Shurupov was made deputy head of the idealogical department headed by Jermolavicius.

So General Naudziunas, secretary of the Lithuanian Communist Party Central Committee, received reinforcement.

On the instructions of M. Burokevicius, member of the Politburo and first secretary of the Lithuanian Communist Party Central Committee, the following responsible workers of the apparatus of the Lithuanian Communist Party Central Committee were sent to work at the Lithuanian Radio and Television Committee, occupied by the Communists and the military: Gintautas Teigvila, Zita Titkiene, Vaigutis Stancikas, Petras Kurklys, Yevgeniy Perov, and Comrade Sukhorukov.

RSFSR

Khasbulatov Urges Yes Vote on Referendum

LD1503190391 Moscow Central Television First Program Network in Russian 1630 GMT 15 Mar 91

[Speech by Ruslan I. Khasbulatov, Russian Soviet Federated Socialist Republic, RSFSR, supreme soviet first deputy chairman, in the studio—recorded]

[Text] Esteemed fellow countrymen, good evening. Two days remain until the referendum. You know that on the 17th two referenda will be held in the Russian Federation—the Union referendum and the Russian referendum. You know that the RSFSR supreme soviet approved and included these two key questions about which we in the supreme soviet leadership and in the supreme soviet have no doubts.

I think that our fellow citizens should express their will and say yes or no about whether the Russian Federation should be in a renewed Union, and they should reply to the question as to what regime they would like to see here in the Russian state. I call on our fellow citizens to reply in the affirmative to both of these complex and fundamental questions.

I will say quite forthrightly that of course there have been many doubts, both among us in the legislature and, as you know, in the newspapers and on television where experts have spoken saying that the first question, the Union referendum, actually contains several questions in one. But respecting as I do the supreme body of authority, the USSR Supreme Soviet, I believe that Russia is a key link in our state, the USSR, and that Russia's destiny and will, along with the destiny and will of its people, depend to a truly great extent on determining the destiny of our renewed Union. Therefore, we in the supreme soviet presidium and in the supreme soviet recommended that our fellow citizens answer the question positively.

At the same time we have also submitted for that same day, the 17th, the question of Russia having its own head of state too. This question, esteemed Comrades, comes not by chance. The fact is that under the Constitution in force, as you kow, we have only a head of parliament. Yet Russia, being a true fulcrum, a cementing factor in our whole Union, naturally should have its own head of state too. The country has the institution of the USSR presidency. Other Union republics are confidently embarking on this path and it is natural that Russia, too, should possess its own head of state.

Unfortunately, the way it has worked out certain forces do not want to have this head of state here in Russia. Of course, it would be rather difficult in 10 minutes for me to explain the inner motives of these people, primarily officials, who are against it. Nevertheless, I would like to say briefly and simply that there are some bureaucratic forces both in the center and in the provinces who find it greatly to their advantage to have a fragmented, weak, impotent Russian so that they can exercise more steady control over it and strip it more surely of its national wealth to the detriment of our impoverished peoples.

Just look at what is going on. There are several oblasts and krays that are objecting to Russian law. What do I read into this? I see this as a declaration of war on the state, rather than on specific individuals. That's the problem. Then in the wake of the oblasts certain autonomous republics are against the referendum. This is worse still. Why? Because you know that painstaking and intensive work is under way to prepare for the signing of a new Union treaty subsequently. Naturally, we are preparing in great earnest for the imminent congress on the 28th when we will debate this new Union treaty. Of course, we expect our autonomous republics to take part in signing it. But by declaring Russian laws, including the law on referenda, invalid, and by refusing to hold this referendum on their territory, a number of autonomous republics have provoked very alarmed reflection from both their populaces and deputies from the oblasts and krays, who wonder whether these autonomous republic want to leave the Russian state.

What does it mean—to leave the Russian state? This would mean redrawing the borders. It would mean severing economic and cultural ties that are centuries old! We should not lose sight of the fact that Russia was created not by the officials in power in the autonomous entities or in the center. The Russian state was in the process of creation for a thousand years. It is not up to us to destroy it.

Thus this expression of disloyalty to the Russian authorities is a very serious factor that implies a threat destructive to the Russian state. For this reason I today call on all officials in the republics, oblast, and krays to weigh their decisions very carefully. Of course they will have to be rescinded, particularly since the RSFSR Supreme Soviet Presidium has annulled all these decisions. They have been deemed illegal. Labor collectives, rayons, and public organizations have been granted the right to mount this referendum.

Just think for a moment. What could be more democratic than to permit a citizen to express his opinion on the future of his homeland? How can such a right be withdrawn? The legitimate right of every citizen! And to do it while at the same time talking about democracy! That makes a mockery of democracy! It ridicules and shows disrespect for the people and the authorities. Therefore of course the law enforcement bodies, the procuracy bodies, and the bodies of the KGB must analyze the present situation very carefully and take some very serious steps to prevent our Constitution from being violated.

I would like to remind you that no one has abolished the Russian Federation Constitution, no one. And the laws of this Constitution must be obeyed by all officials, all organizations, and all Soviets without exception. Of course, we are now living through a very serious period. There are many difficulties and complications. The people are of course worried by our deteriorating economic situation. I assure you that the Russian authorities under these difficult conditions are making every effort to prevent our working people's situation from deteriorating.

Now, in connection with the coming price reform—well, reform is just a conventional word—we are talking of price increases because of the sadly destructive policy of

the central authorities recently, in fact over the last six years. This situation has arisen and there is no escaping it. Obviously this price increase is inevitable. For this situation we have prepared a number of policymaking provisions, a number of measures to secure our people, indeed, to prevent their economic situation from deteriorating. In this situation, when local authorities suddenly declare war on Russian Federation laws, of course people are worried.

People do not know how they should vote and what they should do, how they should behave, and so on. Therefore, I am calling for calm, I am calling for our matters here to be resolved very peacefully. Thank God, you know, there are no large scale interethnic conflicts in the Russian Federation. We have been somehow managing so far to settle our affairs peacefully.

It does make us worry though, what has taken shape as a result of events in South Ossetia. A large number of people are naturally moving to North Ossetia. On top of that there are problems, you know, connected with the need to reestablish the Autonomous Republic of Ingushetiya. By the way, I have been informed that a strike and a demonstration are continuing there. I would like to call on my esteemed fellow citizens, my fellow countrymen, not to continue this strike.

The Supreme Soviet leadership and the Supreme Soviet will do everything necessary to restore the justice that has been violated, in a peaceful way in the interests of those peoples that were subjected to repression. We have already submitted a law on the restoration of rights of repressed peoples, for discussion at the Supreme Soviet. This concerns the Volga Germans as well as other peoples. In such a complex situation the local authorities and the republic supreme soviets need to be more careful, to treat our laws more respectfully. In no way should they hamper the free demonstration of will of their fellow citizens in these days which are decisive for our fatherland's destiny.

I would like to remind you that a renewed Union is indeed a reality. It is undoubtedly a reality. But I would like to say that if there is no united Russia, if there is no united Russian state, there will never be a renewed Union. Both our most top-level politicians and our most, so to speak, rank-and-file fellow citizens must know this. I have been tirelessly repeating this since the moment I occupied this, one of the highest positions in the state. Unfortunately, my appeals have until now remained a voice in the wilderness. Only recently, when the problems around the Union treaty have become, one can say, particularly severe, have people started to understand that the Russian Federation is indeed the core of the renewed Union. Indeed if we want to have a renewed Union we must strengthen the unity of the Russian state. All the parts of this state—I am talking of the autonomous republics as well as krays and oblasts—must act precisely in accordance with our Russian law.

Perhaps Boris Nikolayevich Yeltsin will explain these ideas in greater detail, but you know that because of circumstances which have already been written about in the newspaper KOMSOMOLSKAYA PRAVDA, he has not been able to speak today. For this reason I am speaking and on his behalf. I ask for support for our Russian authorities and I ask that citizens on referendum day vote solidly for these changes to take place in our Russian state as well, for a normal system of power to emerge here too. We need a system of power, a truly strong one but democratic power, power which is supervised by the legislature, power which is supervised by the Congress of People's Deputies.

Some say this to explain why they do not want to hold a referendum: There is no law about what kind of president this is. Well, what about it? The people will express their will and the Supreme Soviet will draft a law, or the Congress of People's Deputies will draft a law about what powers to grant to this president, how his power is to be kept under control, how to create some sort of counter forces to see, let's say, that the president's power is not too strong, undemocratic, and so on. So what I see here are some sort of subterfuges and attempts to avoid giving people the opportunity to vote on the day.

I will say plainly—I have to speak frankly to you, esteemed fellow citizens—comrades from the Russian Communist Party Central Committee are playing a very destructive role. Emissaries of this Central Committee are travelling around oblasts and krays and republics in Russia trying to drive a wedge between people, between various organizations, and to hinder the organizing of the referendum. Of course, I do not think this does anything to make the Russian Communist Party leaders more attractive. I think that in these difficult moments all social forces must find within themselves the courage to unite. We need an alliance, we need practical action, joint action, and I am confident, regardless of the harsh opinions, and generally justified opinions, expressed recently by Boris Nikolayevich Yeltsin, that he is prepared to cooperate both with the president and our supreme state authorities. Why? Because major politicians must always forget about any personal interests they may have and think of the good of the people. We are ready to cooperate, we are ready to harmonize our interests.

What then can we do? We have repeatedly proposed this already: Let's say that the Russian Government and the Union government will jointly agree on what spheres of economic powers should be implemented by each of the governments. Then there will be no war of laws, isn't that so? Each legislature will pass the laws which are in accordance with the powers granted to that legislature, that supreme soviet. Accordingly, this confrontation that the people suffer will come to an end. By the way, I would like to say that the confrontation is not through our initiative. It stems to a large extent from the lack of definition of powers, both Russian and central. So far this relationship has not been rectified. For this reason I

call on both politicians and our fellow citizens, and local authorities to display common sense in the exceptionally crucial times.

I would like to finish on this. Thank you, esteemed citizens. Naturally, we, the Russian authorities, need your support in these times which are very difficult for us and difficult for you. We will try to justify your hopes. Thank you and goodbye.

Pro-, Anti-Referendum Rallies Held in Moscow

LD1603160691 Moscow TASS in English 1532 GMT 16 Mar 91

[By TASS correspondent Nikolay Petrov]

[Text] Moscow March 16 TASS—Rallies of various political parties and public movements were held in some districts of the Soviet capital on the eve of the referendum due to be held on Sunday.

One of them was organised by representatives of the popular movement "Spiritual Revival of Individual" and the Russian Academy under the slogans "Yes to renovated Union," "No to Yeltsinism" "Separatism is a blow to economy of Russia and other republics". It was attended by representatives of other public organisations, specifically, the United Front of Working People and the Intermovement. Speeches made at the rally, which touched upon various problems facing Soviet society, boiled down to the support of the idea of preservation of the Soviet Union as a great power.

A rally of the Democratic Russia movement was held under opposite slogans. It was attended by about 200 people, while its organisers hoped to see there representatives of the labour collectives numbering thousands of people, including the Likhachev automobile works. However, there were practically no workers at the rally. Activists of Democratic Russia, who addressed the rally, urged to say "no" to the renovated Union and support the introduction of executive presidency in Russia. Most speeches were openly anti-Communist.

A rally of the Russian Popular Front, planned for today, was not held, because there was no permission of the city authorities. Only several pickets gathered there, expressing support for striking miners and the Russian leadership.

Representatives of the Democratic Union, notorious for their scandalous actions, held a noisy demonstration outside the Moscow city council, urging their supporters not to take part in the referendum. Although it was not sanctioned by the city authorities, law enforcement bodies did not interfere in it.

By all appearances, Muscovites got tired of demonstrations and rallies. No more than several hundred people took part in each of them.

Moscow Voters Support Russian Presidency

LD1803091591 Moscow TASS International Service in Russian 0837 GMT 18 Mar 91

[By TASS correspondents Lev Aksenov and Yuriy Kozmin]

[Text] Moscow 18 Mar (TASS)—According to preliminary unofficial figures obtained by your TASS correspondents, around 67 percent of the electorate took part in Sunday's referendum in Moscow. Approximately 78 percent of those Muscovites who cast their vote in the Russian referendum voted for the introduction of the post of Russian president.

Approximately 74 percent of those residents of Moscow oblast who took part in the voting backed the idea of a Presidency in the Russian Federation.

Yeltsin Interviewed at Polling Station

LD1703120791 Moscow Radio Rossii Network in Russian 1104 GMT 17 Mar 91

[Remarks by Boris Yeltsin, chairman of the Russian Soviet Federated Socialist Republic Supreme Soviet, to correspondents at a polling station in Moscow on 17 March; recorded by correspondent Yelena Kuznetsova—recorded]

[Text] [Announcer] The entire route from the home of Boris Yeltsin, the chairman of the Russian Supreme Soviet, to the polling stations was lined with people who had come to express their support for Boris Nikolayevich personally, and for the Supreme Soviet and government of Russia. I think you yourselves can hear this well.

[Male voice] The people are with you!

[Yeltsin] Thank you.

[Female voice] Best wishes to your wife, too.

[Yeltsin] Thank you.

[Male voice] We support democracy.

[Female voice] We wish you all the best.

[Yeltsin] Thank you, thank you.

[Announcer] After the voting, a dense ring of journalists surrounded Boris Yeltsin. An improvised news conference was held. Our correspondent Yelena Kuznetsova managed to record it. Undoubtedly, everybody was interested in Borish Yeltsin's attitude to the Union.

[Yeltsin] I am for a reinvigorated Union—and that is all.

[Correspondent] How will the outcome of the referendum affect the future of Russia?

[Yeltsin] The future of Rusia? This is of course not the main factor determining the future of Russia. Nevertheless, for the first time in its history, a period of more than

1,000 years, Russia is getting an opportunity to opt for a chairman elected by the entire people.

[Announcer] Here is what he said about the future of a Union made up of four republics:

[Yeltsin] We are not abandoning this subject. If there are difficulties over the signing of the Union treaty, we will follow this path, the signing into existence of a Union of Four. No doubt, other republics will join this later.

[Announcer] We all know how difficult relations are between Russia and the center. Here is the view of the chairman of the Russian Supreme Soviet:

[Yeltsin] There is a struggle in progress between the center and all the republics—not just the Russian Federation. It's just that the struggle has focused on the Russian Federation, which constitutes, as it were, a wall behind which it has been easier for the other republics to exercise their real sovereignty. Such a position is in their interests. Therefore, it is better to strike at Russia in order to send a corresponding signal to the other republics. Such a struggle is in progress.

The center wishes to preserve the system. It does not want to change anything, keeping the unitarian state system and running it rigidly from above down in a centralized way. We are, on the other hand, in favor of destroying it and creating on a democratic basis a new state and new relations, so as to make republics effectively as independent as possible. We want the republics to be the states, and we want the role of the center to be small, indeed confined to coordinating just two or three general questions on the scale of the whole country.

[Correspondent] Nevertheless, is compromise possible between the republics and the center?

[Yeltsin] If, of course, we manage to sign the Union treaty in the form we envisage it ourselves, then all conflicts would cease.

Further on Yeltsin Interview

LD1703093391 Moscow TASS International Service in Russian 0853 GMT 17 Mar 91

[By TASS legislative correspondent Yuriy Kozmin]

[Text] Moscow, 17 March (TASS)—The head of the Russian parliament, Boris Yeltsin, has described the union referendum as the "democratic path" of development of the political situation in the USSR and in Russia. The referendum, which is being held in the USSR today, is on the question of whether the USSR should continue to exist as a state.

In parallel with the union referendum, the Russian Federation is holding a republic referendum on the introduction of the presidency in the Russian Soviet Federated Socialist Republic [RSFSR]. After voting in his Moscow constituency today, Boris Yeltsin answered questions from Soviet and foreign journalists. He considers that Russia's future will be largely determined by the Congress of People's Deputies of the republic which opens in Moscow on 28 March. The chairman of the RSFSR Supreme Soviet said the congress will examine such important issues as the economic and political situation in the republic and the problems of switching the economy to market relations. The government of Russia will present its program for 1991-92.

In answer to a question about disagreements between the leaders of the center and of Russia, the head of the republic's government said: "These are not disagreements between Yeltsin and Gorbachev, but between two policies, two approaches." Yeltsin asserted that "the USSR president wants to preserve the system, the huge apparatus of bureaucracy and power, the CPSU," which he, Yeltsin, wants to see destroyed. The head of the Russian legislature advocated in this connection the creation of a "democratic system" founded upon a "union of sovereign republics."

TASS on Referendum Results in Soviet Far East

LD1703191891 Moscow TASS International Service in Russian 1233 GMT 17 Mar 91

[By TASS correspondent Yuriy Vitrishchak]

[Text] Khabarovsk, 17 Mar (TASS)—Although there is an absence of the "hot spot" characteristics of a number of regions in the Soviet Union on the map of Khabarovsk Kray (USSR Far East), the referendum which has just come to a close here has taken place in a far from simple situation. A difficult economic position and the social problems of minority peoples have shaped the contradictory attitudes of the inhabitants of this kray to this event.

Mass meetings and gatherings took place in the Soviet Amur region on the eve of the referendum, and there were calls both for the preservation of the Union and against it. The need for introducing the post of president of the Russian Federation was also hotly debated. The opinion of the majority of inhabitants of the Far East will become known after information is received from the 1328 polling stations on the kray's territory and from vessels on the ocean.

Valentina Syavaeva, the secretary of a constituency commission, said when talking to a TASS correspondent: "The referendum which is being held will allow the fairly high political activity of inhabitants of the kray to be judged, for only an insignificant proportion of the population has failed to take part in it." In the words of Syavaeva, conflict situations also arose in the course of holding the referendum. For example, one of the leaders of the local organization of the republican party of Russia made a statement on violations of the law on holding the referendum. In his view, the distribution of two ballots—Union and Russian—on one list should not

be allowed. There were individual instances of agitation—forbidden on the day of the referendum—being carried out.

Yeltsin Quizzed in Newspaper Phone-in

PM1503151191 Moscow KOMSOMOLSKAYA PRAVDA in Russian 14 Mar 91 p 2

[Yu. Sorokin, S. Orlyuk, and D. Muratov account of B. Yeltsin "Direct Line" phone-in at KOMSOMOLSKAYA PRAVDA offices 11 March: "Boris Yeltsin Has Stated That There Will Be No Civil War and Answered 100 Questions about Peace, Bread, and Yeltsin"]

[Text]

"You Are Wrong!"

[Caller] Hello, is that Yeltsin?

[Yeltsin] Yes, this is Yeltsin.

[Caller] When are you going to kick the bucket?

[Yeltsin] Well, not yet, I still have things to do.

Russians Abroad

[Caller] Hello. I am calling from Ivanovo Oblast. There are persistent rumors here that you have been going around the country specially to urge civil war.

[Yeltsin] Where have I been to?

[Caller] To Yaroslavl.

[Yeltsin] I have visited half of Russia. I need to know how Russians are living. I need to know personally, not over the phone or from the TV set. I have not been calling for any civil war. If you had listened to Radio Rossii you would have heard me say that civil war is simply unthinkable in our country. We do not have such social contradictions between social groups of the population, between employees, the intelligentsia, the working class, the peasantry, and the military. Do not try to frighten people.

[Caller] This is a reserve colonel from Vladikavkaz speaking.... The country is in the grip of interethnic conflicts. Tell the people, is it not the corrupt party apparatus that is provoking all this so as to open the way to dictatorship?

[Yeltsin] I think that is so. I think that you are right.

[Caller] Boris Nikolayevich, this is Svetlana Makarovna. Can the military units presently stationed on Russian territory be regarded as a rental agency? The events in the Baltic showed that any private individual can ask for help and the order will be given....

[Yeltsin] Do you think that the military went into the Baltic without orders from above?

[Caller] But the president did not know, Yazov did not know, no one knew....

[Yeltsin] This could not have happened without them. Under garrison service regulations a garrison chief does not have the authority to make such decisions. That is all there is to it.

[Caller] Hello. They say that you were ill a long time, do they not?

[Yeltsin] I had flu. I am better now.

[Caller] You should eat onions and garlic—they are very good for that....

[Caller] Boris Nikolayevich, I am interested in the fate of the Union and Russia. I have relatives in Moldavia, the Ukraine, Siberia, and the Baltic. At the rally yesterday the democrats suggested that I vote against the Union. But my relatives live there! How can I be parted from them? Everyone will have his own army, does that mean that my relatives will fight against me? It is necessary to vote for the Union!

[Yeltsin] But for the new Union, not the old system!

[Caller] Boris Nikolayevich, when will you go on television and say: Please vote for the Union....

[Yeltsin] But the important thing is not just the preservation of the Union. If it is preserved in its present form we will be preserving not the country but the system which is bringing that country down today. This is nothing less than suicide. The question is cunningly worded. Do you agree?

[Caller] This is Antonina Sergeyevna from Moscow. Are you against the referendum?

[Yeltsin] No.

[Caller] But that is how you act, speak, and write all the time.

[Yeltsin] What do you mean...? Have I urged people not to take part in the referendum? N-e-v-e-r.

[Same caller] We are going to the polls to prevent the Soviet Union from disintegrating. We are very indignant that this is what you are insisting on....

[New caller] Aleksandr Nikolayevich Fomin here. How do you view the Russian population in other republics? As a factor hindering the formation of policy or as fellow countrymen in distress who need help....

[Yeltsin] Undoubtedly they are our fellow countrymen, some of whom are in a difficult situation. Thus it is the duty of Russia, the Supreme Soviet, and the leadership to help in some way. But understand me, protecting people with tanks—that is impossible. Their lives will become far more difficult afterward. Relations with those republics must be placed on a legal basis, what is more an international-legal basis. Which is what we are

doing now. Then we can resolve any instance of discrimination against the Russian population by law, applying our sanctions to that republic or state. For example, we have concluded treaties with Latvia and Estonia and now they are rectifying their laws on a number of points.

[Caller] Do you want Russians to remain where they are living? Or do they have the opportunity to return home?

[Yeltsin] I think that they must choose where they want to be. But if they want to return to Russia we will create all the necessary conditions. Incidentally, in the treaties with other republics we provide compensation for material losses caused when people leave and accordingly we grant credits to enable people to build themselves a home and settle on Russian soil.

[Caller] Hello. This is Andrey Nikolayevich Naumov from Riga. I have been living in Latvia for 33 years. Now they are calling us occupiers, emigrants, or colonists. I would like to know your opinion.

[Yeltsin] I believe that Russians should live in Latvia on equal terms with the indigenous population. You are not colonists or occupiers at all. That is completely untrue. I believe that the situation will gradually be sorted out. Perhaps people should not be in a hurry to make decisions about leaving. If people do decide to leave, of course, we will accept them in Russia. But I do not even want to think about a mass resettlement of peoples.

Yeltsin and Parties

[Caller] This is Aleksandr Gorbunov from Belorussia calling. Tell me, please, is the breakthrough that you, the democratic forces, are trying to achieve possible today?

[Yeltsin] My opinion is that we have reached the critical moment in the struggle against the system. The system is fighting for survival, it is not letting go of the levers of power which it uses today. I think that the breakthrough will come this year—either in one direction or the other. But nevertheless, I believe that the democratic forces will triumph.

[Caller] But will you personally be able to ensure victory?

[Yeltsin] No. I cannot do that alone. At Cinema House on 9 March I met with representatives of Russia's democratic forces and there, like many other people, I said: If the democrats really unite and operate in an organized way, then of course something will come of it. The party apparatus has now gone out to the farms, the shops, into the streets, it is waging a mass attack and actively using disinformation. But we do not have the kind of vast apparatus to enable us to really "get through to everyone," we do not have the experience. Nevertheless, we must switch from being an amorphous, poorly organized democratic movement to a powerful party. I should add right away that I am certainly not presenting myself as head of that party because I am opposed to the combination of a top state post with the leadership of a party.

[Caller] Hello, Boris Nikolayevich. My surname is Moskvich, I actually come from Moscow, my forename is Andrey, I am 27 years old, a servicemen, and a nonparty man. I would like to know your attitude toward the problem of party organizations in the armed forces. Should they exist?

[Yeltsin] No, I support departyization.

[Caller] Hello, Boris Nikolayevich! Natalya Vitalyevna Chezhik here. I am a doctor. This is my question to you. You left the CPSU. Quite an interesting step to take. Your explanation for this action was that you were going to express the interests of all groups, so to speak, representatives of different views. But your recent speeches tell a completely different story. Do you now express only the slogans of Democratic Russia and the party that is created by it?

[Yeltsin] No. I do not intend to be either the leader or director of the newly created party. No way.

[Caller] Understood. But you are the intellectual driving force behind Democratic Russia....

[Yeltsin] But from conviction—I can have convictions, can I not?—from conviction I share this bloc's democratic views.

[Caller] But why do you now persecute others for holding other convictions?

[Yeltsin] No, I am not persecuting a-n-y-o-n-e. I believe that even among communists there are a great many intelligent people and people who do not adhere to the conservative forces' positions.

[Caller] Boris Nikolayevich, you are being used as a banner by forces which operate under the slogans "Down with the Soviet socialist system!" and "The red scum have destroyed the motherland." They paraded those slogans at the 10 March rally in your support in Leningrad's Palace Square. Do you understand what harm you are doing to the country by your attempts to settle scores with Gorbachev and realize your bonapartist power claims by resorting to crude attacks on the leadership of the country and the CPSU? After all, this is all designed to provoke yet another wave of mass support for the disgraced and criticized saviour of Russia.... (The handset is slammed down)

Two Referendums

[Caller] Boris Nikolayevich? Hello. This is Arkadiy Markovich, a miner. We live in the Ukraine but we put our faith and hopes in you. What is your advice for 17 March?

[Yeltsin] Arkadiy, there is, of course, great confusion over the Union referendum. It is actually three questions in one.

[Caller] Even four.

[Yeltsin] Quite right. People ask me to say plainly how to vote—yes or no—but I cannot make such recommendations; that would bring me under powerful attack again. I think that you understand that yourself.

[Caller] Boris Nikolayevich, there are many doubts on both sides....

[Yeltsin] I hear what you are saying, Arkadiy. But do not push me. I am not going to tell you how to vote.

[Same caller] OK, Boris Nikolayevich. Hang in there! Take care.

[New caller] This is Kozhevnikov, a worker from Bryansk. What changes do you anticipate after the introduction of the post of president in Russia?

[Yeltsin] We need a strengthening of authority. But not just authority as such, an authority which enjoys the confidence of the majority of the people. With the introduction of the presidency we will be able to strengthen the powers of the soviets at all levels. Take the following situation as an example: an oblast soviet chairman who is also party oblast committee first secretary. But he has to implement Central Committee plenum decisions first of all rather than the laws of the Russian Supreme Soviet. But a president will be able to influence that situation, he will also have major rights on cadre reorganizations. I am for a presidency, but not the kind which would exclude the government, no. The post of president and at the same time a powerful government—that is what Russia needs.

[Caller] Dmitriy from Odessa here. Tell us clearly once and for all: Is Russia leaving the Union?

[Yeltsin] I can reaffirm that it is not. Russia will be in the Union of states, but only those states which have more power, more statehood, and which voluntarily transfer to the center those functions which they want to transfer.

[Caller] Esteemed Boris Nikolayevich, Comrade Nazarbayev declared in ARGUMENTY I FAKTY that you and he had approached Comrade Gorbachev with a proposal to head a union of "five." But now you are calling for Gorbachev's resignation. What does this mean?

[Yeltsin] Nazarbayev and I went to Gorbachev and explained to him that we wanted to sign a treaty involving four or five republics so as to lay the foundations for a Union treaty, which would be easier to sign when four or five of the largest republics have already signed it. But we never asked Gorbachev to head this group of republics.

[Caller] But that is what it says in ARGUMENTY I FAKTY and these are the words of Nazarbayev himself.

[Yeltsin] But I actually took part in that discussion. And I give you my word—this is exactly how it was. We told the president about the proposed treaty so that people wouldn't think of us as clandestine operators.

Newspapers and Television

[Caller] I am calling from Belorussia; subscriptions to RSFSR [Russian Soviet Federated Socialist Republic] Supreme Soviet publications have been banned here. I think that this is discrimination and a violation of the treaty that you signed with the Belorussian leadership.

[Yeltsin] The point is that the print run of ROSSIYSKAYA GAZETA is just 350,000 copies at the moment. By mid-year we hope to increase that to 500,000 and by the end of the year to 2 million. In 1992 we plan to make subscriptions available to the whole Union.

[Caller] A second question. Why did Central Television not show your 9 March House of Theater speech? Do you not have the right to demand that the State Committee for Television and Radio Broadcasting leadership broadcast your speech so that the peoples of Russia can examine it?

[Yeltsin] Recently Kravchenko signed a letter containing a request to allocate one hour of air time on 15 March. But I am not sure they will give me an opportunity to speak. Nowadays even glasnost has begun to be infringed. This is highly regrettable. (Footnote) (B. Yeltsin's House of Theater speech was shown on Leningrad Television, transmitted by Radio Rossii, and published in ROSSIYSKAYA GAZETA and MOSKOVSKIY KOMSOMOLETS.

(But the Central Television transmission on 15 March will not take place. L. Kravchenko has sent B. Yeltsin an official letter saying that in view of the population's unfavorable reaction to Yeltsin's 9 March speech and also the generally unfavorable atmosphere in the country, he cannot be given air time on Central Television).

[Caller] Boris Nikolayevich, greetings from Kharkov. Why do you not sue when information about you is distorted or when you are publicly insulted?

[Yeltsin] If I went to court over every libel in the newspapers in every oblast I would have to start up a large legal practice. That is why some people at local levels file a suit themselves. They ring up and say: You have been libeled. I say: Fine, go ahead! And an action group goes to court. What is more they have won many cases.

[Caller] A second question: How can I contribute money to help the miners?

[Yeltsin] A miners' aid fund has been set up. The account number is 001700911 in the name of the city workers' committee at the Novokusnetzk branch of the USSR Bank for Housing and Municipal Services and Social Development... I have already made a contribution.

[Caller] What will happen to TV Channel Two? When can we expect a Russian channel?

[Yeltsin] We can't. Three times the president promised to allocate a second television channel and three times he did not keep his word. We are now taking urgent measures to obtain our own network. It is a pity that we have wasted six months hoping...

Money

[Caller] Natalya Konstantinovna here from Glazov. What do you think about the price hike?

[Yeltsin] The point is that there is no way out now. Having raised wholesale and purchase prices on 1 January, the Union government has made it necessary for enterprises and for us all to increase prices too... But such an increase is now inevitable, unfortunately...

[Caller] So it will happen?

[Yeltsin] Yes. But at first there will be compensation. Our position is this: For food the compensation must amount to 100 percent. On children's goods—100 percent. As for other goods—it will be related to pay.

[Caller] Hello, Boris Nikolayevich. I am calling on behalf of the militia detachment in Barnaul. Tell me what laws should we be working under—Russian or Union?

[Yeltsin] You have to work according to Russian laws. And be accountable under Russian laws. And if Russian laws are not obeyed—we have a law for that, too. Initially a fine of 10,000 rubles [R], then more—up to two years.

[Caller] Will there be a pay raise for militia staffers in Russia?

[Yeltsin] Militia workers' pay will be increased from the middle of this year by R200 under Russian law.

[Same caller] That's all, thanks.

[New caller] Hello, Boris Nikolayevich, this is Tatyana Ivanovna, a production chief at a dairy in Nizhniy Novgorod Oblast. Silayev has said that small enterprises are now going to be privatized.

Our collective isn't able to buy out our enterprise!

[Yeltsin] Tatyana Ivanovna, we have several approaches toward privatization. A draft law has now been prepared and will be adopted at a session of the RSFSR Supreme Soviet. The draft also envisages the transfer of enterprises without cost or at residual value. It depends on the level of the enterprise's profitability, do you understand? It won't be like this: Give us 900,000, pay up, that's it. No. There will be a special aoproach to those plants directedly linked to producing foodstuffs. Possibly there will be a notional payment, interest-free credits, or nonreturnable credits.

[Caller] Hi, my name is Olya. I am 15. I am calling from the Ukraine. What I want to know is this: Is there going to be a law banning the export of industrial and food goods from Russian territory, too?

[Yeltsin] If that happened, Olya, there would have to be customs posts all over Russia. Can you imagine what that would be like—customs posts in Russia? That would be a bizarre and very expensive form of entertainment. I can understand it when a small republic makes such a decision. But Russia? This is very complex. Our decision to check out the cities of Brest and Chop is a different matter. According to our statistics, the amount of food that has passed through those stations from the Union is several times higher than the supply from there to the Union. We will probably set up a deputies' group to investigate these facts. But sealing Russia off entirely—impossible.

[Caller] ...I want to lease land. The rural soviet agreed, the city soviet executive committee agreed, the city soviet presidium agreed, all the pointers were favorable, I argued my case everywhere. Now they have all gone back on their word. They say the city soviet session still has to agree. Now even the state farm which is providing the land has gone back on its word. They say that a limit has been set—40 hectares.

[Yeltsin] There are no limits. That is claptrap. We have now adopted a package of laws—on the land, on ownership, on the peasant farm—covering all this.

The Council of Ministers and the Supreme Soviet have set ail land users a deadline for filling out new land use documents. Each collective farm, state farm, and enterprise must file documents with the land reform commission. And if a kolkhoz has, for example, 10,000 hectares but uses only 8,000 the soviets will take those 2,000 hectares and allocate them to peasants.

[Caller] Boris Nikolayevich, I am completely on your side. I am 65. I worked 45 years of my life. I am a class two invalid. Now they are levying this miserable 5-percent tax on us which is infuriating the whole people.

[Yeltsin] It infuriates me, too.

[Caller] Is there really nothing that can be done? You tell us what the people must do to get it abolished so that they do not take away our last few pennies. Or is 4,000 not enough for him [not further specified]?

[Yeltsin] We are also opposed to this measure. The Russian Government has now drawn up a list of foodstuffs and certain commodities to which the 5-percent tax does not apply. Although this will not remedy the situation, of course.

A Different Generation

[Caller] Hello, I am Vsevolod Martenyamov. I am 24 and I come from Moscow. Boris Nikolayevich, we think that in general young people are apolitical and equally indifferent to Communists and democrats alike. I would like to know what you think.

[Yeltsin] If that is so, I would ask the KOMSOMOLSKAYA PRAVDA people to give us a little more time. This is a very important question. I can assure you that

we do understand fully the need for a state-level youth policy in the RSFSR. What do we mean by a state youth policy? First, the constant implementation of socioeconomic measures. There are youth programs in existence. We have created special committees attached to executive and legislative organs which ensure the inclusion of youth questions in all laws. Look at the draft law on privatization—it mentions young people there, too. The law on social protection for the population also mentions them. And so on... To put it simply, we must give each youngster the opportunity for a normal start in life.

Some will say that this is an encouragement to loafers. No.. Children abroad distance themselves from their parents, as it were; they begin living independent lives from early childhood. Sometimes families even have different budgets even though they possibly live in the same house. It is the other way around in our country. Parasitism has been encouraged all the time. What is the point of our policy? We are making young people a loan, we are giving them a credit, and in the most productive periods of their lives they will reveal their potential and repay society a hundredfold.

Miscellaneous...

[Caller] Boris Nikolayevich, I think it is necessary to unite beneath the coat of arms and flag of Russia. When will this be done eventually?

[Yeltsin] Draft laws on symbolic and heraldic emblems have been prepared. But we have rather more important matters to attend to at the moment. For example, we need a law on privatization...

[Caller] But is Russia going to get a tricolor?

[Yeltsin] That is for the supreme soviet to decide. I am in favor of it, but we do not have a democratic majority in the legislature. So it will be difficult.

[Caller] A few questions. Can you tell us, please, what the conflict over the departyization of educational establishments is all about?

[Yeltsin] Stanislav Smirnov, chairman of the RSFSR Supreme Soviet Youth Affairs Committee, started studying this question. Polozkov and his Russian Communist Party Central Committee went and expelled him from the party. Personally, I favor the departyization of all educational establishments.

[Caller] Ivanov from Ulyanovsk: Is it true you intend to send agents to all parts of Russia to take command of everything, as the commissars did in 1917?

[Yeltsin] We are proposing the establishment of the institution of agent of the Supreme Soviet, but not to take command in the provinces; rather to monitor the implementation of Russian laws.

[Caller] Lyudmila Alekseyevna Ilicheva, lawyer, Samara. Why did British Prime Minister John Major not meet with you during his Moscow visit? What kind of links does Russia have with foreign countries at the moment?

[Yeltsin] As for the British prime minister's visit, I had flu at the time, so he could not meet with me. As for Russian contacts with other countries, we have already concluded direct agreements with Turkey, Greece, and Taiwan and are currently holding talks with South Korea and with Japan, the FRG, France, and the United States. Of course, the center does not want Russia to conduct an independent foreign policy, so it is doing its utmost to counter, to block our steps. This is exemplified by the notorious "case of the 140 billion," which was fabricated for the express purpose of compromising Russia's embryonic independent foreign economic activity.

[Caller] Buses from Riga have started arriving in Leningrad with "St. Petersburg" written on the destination sign. What do you think of this?

[Yeltsin] It is wrong. I will try to get in touch with Riga about it. The Leningrad City Soviet has not adopted a decision on renaming the city. Without that, without a decision by the Russian Supreme Soviet, it is simply interference in a sovereign republic's internal affairs.

[Caller] Boris Nikolayevich, is it true what they say, that practically all our miners are on strike?

[Yeltsin] No, no, no. I had some miners visit me this morning, a group of seven. They themselves called their strike a "wave." That is, they cannot simply up and leave the face, say, for a week. So the strike follows the pattern—one mine stops work for 24 hours, a second mine stops work for 24 hours. You cannot say that all the miners are on strike. It is a lie.

[Caller] Boris Nikolayevich, what do you think of the decree on workers' control?

[Yeltsin] I think it is an ineffective measure. The most important thing is to have a law and taxes. Judicial organs and oversight and internal affairs organs must see that the laws are observed. But workers' control is a return to the system that was abolished by the Congress of Russian People's Deputies. So I take a negative view of it. Believe me, it will do no good.

[Caller] Boris Nikolayevich, you write in your book that you do not like playing second fiddle. Was it not your character that prompted the demand for Gorbachev's resignation?

[Yeltsin] It is not a matter now of the "Gorbachev-Yeltsin" relationship. It is a question of the existence of the system, a question of defending the sovereignty of Russia. If Russia continues to be bereft of rights, it will never shake off its provincial status. You must see this. It is not a question of the character of a Yeltsin or a Gorbachev. It is not down to personalities...

[Caller] Bogomolov calling from Chita. I have a question about the protection of the RSFSR Government. It is made up of educated people, professionals, and they are

constantly subject to attack and humiliation. What is to be done to preserve this government which is now a viable concern?

[Yeltsin] As chairman of the supreme soviet I support the government and its chairman. Our views coincide and in general we work pretty harmoniously. There is, of course, very great pressure from the Communist Russia legislative group. The attacks are coordinated. They now want to replace the government and the leadership of the supreme soviet. Well, that's the struggle for you.

[Caller] Anna Pavlovna Chertkova calling from Saratov. When you see your portraits at rallies and people applaud any appearance of yours, does this remind you of anything?

[Yeltsin] It does. And believe me, I find this disagreeable too. But, unfortunately, it does not depend on me.

[Caller] It does depend on you. And it has to be fought against somehow.

[Yeltsin] Okay, I will specially stipulate that there be no such portraits...

[Caller] Boris Nikolayevich? Hello. I am Yelena Pavlovna. My question is as follows: If the people despise their own intelligence and persecute the intelligentsia, do such people deserve Yeltsin and democracy?

[Yeltsin] It is not the leadership, the government, and the supreme soviet which choose the people, but vice versa. I know that our people have enormous potential—creative, intellectual, and cultural. But, unfortunately, in recent decades they have been sorely tormented by every kind of adversity. Nevertheless a revival of the spirituality and culture of our people has to be hoped for.

[Caller] Boris Nikolayevich, this is Leonid Yakovlevich on the line. Russia is ours. Why, then, are you so favorably disposed to the Jews?

[Yeltsin] Why do you say that?

[Caller] Because you are pursuing a wrong policy.

[Yeltsin] I have never made an issue of nationality. I think that every nation and every people should have equal rights... In any case, you assess people by criteria other than what is marked in their passport, if at all possible.

[Caller] My name is Aleksandr Ivanovich Shcherbinin, calling you from Minsk. Who is insisting on the extraordinary congress of RSFSR people's deputies and why?

[Yeltsin] In my view, the extraordinary congress of Russian deputies has been imposed on us at a most unfortunate time—we have to get ready for the sowing season, agriculture has to be improved, and land must be given to those who want it. That is the work we have to be getting on with rather than assembling at a congress to chatter about the political situation. Of course the main question is getting rid of Yeltsin. But, you know, if they don't manage to do so, "the six" should resign. That is how decent people should act.

[Caller] Hello! Boris Nikolayevich? Good day to you. This is Yevgeniy Viktorovich Telkov from Moscow. Could you say what specific measures are now to be taken to extricate our country from crisis?

[Yeltsin] ...Can't you hear? Well, I'll repeat for the third time. Separate the functions of the center and the republics. Sign a Union treaty which provides for the separation of those functions. Complete the preparation of the program to stabilize the economy and switch to market relations. After 15 March it will be discussed at the session and adopted.

...And KOMSOMOLSKAYA PRAVDA's Questions

[KOMSOMOLSKAYA PRAVDA] To what extent are you influenced by your entourage?

[Yeltsin] There is a group, of course, whose task is political and economic forecasting. What the social or political results of an event might be. Each question has to be worked through. The team is made up of pretty independent and tough-minded people, and I am used to their criticism.

I would like to talk about the 9 March Cinema House speech. I wrote it at night and when I mounted the rostrum realized that I couldn't just read out a speech in that auditorium. I said what I felt. And the next day members of the "team" came to me and told me I had made mistakes in the speech. The word "enemies" was unnecessary. I agreed. The word "war" likewise. I agreed. I should perhaps have read out the text after all, many errors would then have been avoided.

But I will reiterate: When they are minded to convince me that a compromise must be sought with those people from "the six," I consider it pointless to try to persuade them. You can only persuade people who have doubts.

[KOMSOMOLSKAYA PRAVDA] Regarding the question of the team: Not only did Shatalin walk out on Gorbachev, Yavlinskiy walked out on Yeltsin!

[Yeltsin] No! Yavlinskiy did not walk out on Yeltsin or Silayev. He did talented work, but the "500 days" was ultimately rejected at the Union rather than the Russian level. So I supported his resignation.

[KOMSOMOLSKAYA PRAVDA] But Filshin, a deputy prime minister, also walked out on Silayev.

[Yeltsin] First, that happened without me. I was a supporter. I would of course have tried to stand up for Filshin. I am certain the campaign against Filshin was a planned action. From the very outset they have tried to question Russia's foreign economic activity. But we will hold on to Filshin for Russia all the same. Just as we have held on to Yavlinskiy—he's an advisor to Silayev. And I think he will go further.

[KOMSOMOLSKAYA PRAVDA] But Yavlinskiy also quit because the Russian parliament increased purchase prices and then parliament adopted the pensions law. That is to say, there are two factors (even before the center's decision) which in many regards undermined in principle the "500 days" program.

[Yeltsin] Indeed this would have upset the start of the "500 days" program—incidentally, we postponed its start by a month because of this. Why did we do that? Because the center increased purchase prices for grain. That's where the initial mistake was made. What was the result? Stockraising declined, because feed grain tripled in price. Faced with this, we consulted with the peasants: What was to be done? There was only one answer: Purchase prices for meat had to be urgently increased. Did we get it wrong? I was recently in Yaroslavl and Novgorod Oblasts. I was convinced in my conversations there that this was the right step. It was not the reason for our difficulties. If the program had been adopted, we would have fought for every clause of it.

[KOMSOMOLSKAYA PRAVDA] You said in Kazan that Russia's autonomous republics can take as much sovereignty as "they can digest." They are doing so. As a result it is difficult for Russia to sign any Union treaty. The autonomous formations want to act as independent states rather than as part of a sovereign Russia. Did you not bind yourself hand and foot by this promise which you gave almost six months ago?

[Yeltsin] I do not take back what I said. And I confirm today that autonomous formations will take as much sovereignty as they can manage—everything will have to be agreed. But they will have to be equally accountable for the well-being of their people. We have one condition: They must be party to a federal treaty inside Russia. I stress we will not allow Russia to fall apart.

[KOMSOMOLSKAYA PRAVDA] Hitherto many leaders of party organs have simultaneously headed soviets, which is a direct breach of the relevant Russian law. The other day you stated that the Russian Prosecutor's Office should institute proceedings in all these cases.

[Yeltsin] Indeed the Russian law states that it is not allowed to combine the posts of secretary of a CPSU oblast, kray, or city committee and chairman of a corresponding soviet. It was adopted at the very beginning of our activity and we gave enough time for it be carried out. Many have relinquished one of their posts, but there are stubborn people—roughly 10 percent. And it is precisely where the combining of posts is retained that the political line pursued, as a rule, is one which is dictated by the CPSU Central Committee and runs contrary to the decisions of the Russian Supreme Soviet. That is why we set a final deadline—15 March. Everyone will have to decide by that date which post they will remain in. The Russian Prosecutor's Office should now swing into action. Its job is to monitor the observance of Russian laws.

[KOMSOMOLSKAYA PRAVDA] Boris Nikolayevich, imagine that one evening there is a ring on the bell of your apartment and Mikhail Sergeyevich and Raisa Maksimovna are standing there in the doorway. What would be your reaction?

[Yeltsin] First, it would be necessary to invite them in. The women would go into the kitchen, where there would be women's talk. While our discussion... I would say to him: For 3 years I asked you, implored you to lean on the left, to rely on the forces of the left. We would not then have allowed the right-wing front, which is now squeezing you, to develop so far. It is the right rather than the left which will remove you today. Incidentally, you recently called the right left and the left right, so no one now will now be able to tell who's who according to you. On the other hand, it is clear that Polozkov now criticizes you more than I do... I do not aspire to your role, I will not be your alternative. But there is one thing I will not give up: Let Russia breathe, give it autonomy. Russia has everything it needs to solve its problems. Provided only that the doomed system does not hinder it.

[KOMSOMOLSKAYA PRAVDA] Do you feel fear?

[Yeltsin] No.

Radio Rossii Reports TSN Announcers Suspended

LD1603131491 Moscow Radio Rossii Network in Russian 1130 GMT 16 Mar 91

[Text] The leadership of the All-Union State Television and Radio Company has demanded an explanation from Bela Kurkova on what basis she broadcast Yeltsin's talk in "The Fifth Circle." (a Leningrad television program, which Kurkova presents]

Finally, literally a few minutes ago, although this information has not been completely verified, we discovered that yesterday the leader of the All-Union State Television and Radio Company suspended the three main announcers of the Television News Service [TSN] from broadcasting. At the moment, the information editorial board of television, headed by Kravchenko, is feverishly searching for someone who can present the regular TSN bulletin, but no strike- breakers have yet been found. We will try to discover more details from our colleagues in Central Television.

Radio Rossii Not Heard in Moscow, Leningrad

LD1503125991 Moscow Radio Rossii Network in Russian 1146 GMT 15 Mar 91

[Text] I want to remind our listeners that Radio Rossii operates on the wavelengths of Radio 2. Admittedly, the editorial office is now receiving phone calls saying that, for some reason, even on 3-program radio receivers, Radio Rossii cannot be heard today after pressing the third button that normally gets Radio 2. I do not know what is wrong. A technical interruption [tekhnicheskiy pereryv] usually happens on Wednesday, but today is

Friday. Yet we cannot be heard by either Moscow or Leningrad. That is very sad. I hope that perhaps the rest of Russia can hear us. Maybe that information was wrong. Maybe someone's radio is simply not working. Please, our esteemed listeners, be so kind as to look into the matter. Perhaps something is wrong with your radio. In theory, everything should be working normally today. We have a technical interruption on Wednesday from 1400 to 1500 [1100-1200 GMT], but today, I remind you, is Friday.

Yeltsin Chairs Coordinating Council Meeting

LD1403120191 Moscow Radio Rossii Network in Russian 1100 GMT 14 Mar 91

[Text] A meeting of the Supreme Coordinating Council with Boris Nikolayevich Yeltsin in the chair took place today. After the meeting Gennadiy Burbulis, the authorized representative of the chairman of the Russian Supreme Soviet, reported that the participants in the meeting made an analysis and forecast of the development of events after the results of the referendum are known. The strategy and tactics on the threshold of the Congress of RSFSR People's Deputies and after it were also discussed. An exchange of opinions took place and an assessment was given with regard to the activities of the Russian Supreme Soviet and its chairman.

Polozkov Criticizes Yeltsin, RSFSR Presidency

LD1603214791 Moscow TASS International Service in Russian 1416 GMT 16 Mar 91

[By TASS correspondent Vasiliy Belousov]

[Text] Murmansk, 16 Mar (TASS)—"I resolutely object to the presidency being introduced in the Russian Soviet Federated Socialist Republic [RSFSR]," said Ivan Polozkov, first secretary of the Russian Communist Party Central Committee Friday at a meeting with workers of the "Severonikel" combine, a major nonferrous metallurgy enterprise. "The strength of the USSR and its future lies solely in the unity of the republics. This is why everyone who holds the interests of his homeland dear must say 'yes' to the Union treaty at the upcoming referendum, and 'no' to the introduction of presidential rule in the RSFSR."

Ivan Polozkov sharply criticized Boris Yeltsin's plan aimed at stabilizing the economic situation in the republic and at improving the people's living standards. In his opinion, this plan will not lead to the creation, but to the destruction and squandering of that which has been created over the decades by the Soviet people.

The stabilization of the situation in Russia and throughout the country is not possible unless relations between Union republics are strengthened, he said. The best evidence of this is today's situation at the "Severonikel" combine. It is because the traditional links between this enterprise and closely related enterprises in other oblasts and republics of the country have broken down that the metalurgists have been forced to suspend production, having lost more than $40 million in five days of stoppage alone.

Polozkov Interviewed on Russian CP, His Image

LD1703162891 Moscow Radio Rossii Network in Russian 1344 GMT 17 Mar 91

[Interview with Ivan Polozkov, first secretary of the Russian Communist Party, by correspondent Svetlana Bokova, "In the Kola Peninsula," date not given—recorded]

[Text] [Bokova] I have formed an impression that you are not exactly the kind of person that they have been talking and writing a lot about. That is, the image which has been created for you does not correspond with your essential personality. Do you agree with this?

[Polozkov] Thank you for your insight. It is, indeed, moving. For the last five years, at least, I have been lampooned. My wife has been wondering a lot why I have been presented in such a way. She says: I know you better, and you are not like that. However, this is, of course, a joke. While, seriously speaking, this imagemaking, creating such a negative picture of the leader of the Russian Communist Party—this is, of course, a political war, and not against myself as a person. Perhaps, some personal features of my character play a certain role in it, but no matter who occupies my post—it could be any Ivanov, Petrov, or Sidorov.

With the Russian Communist Party taking the position it is taking today—that of a firm champion of the socialist choice who warns against—and tries to prevent—any more experimenting with our people: our upholding of the independence and sovereignty of Russia, at least, the welfare of Russia's people—in such a situation anyone elected first secretary would face the same fate. The thing is that the forces that want to make Russia reverse its course and want to put it onto a different track in its development cannot resign themselves to the fact that the Russian Communist Party is probably the only force today which prevents them from having their way.

Therefore, I must agrere to this, and bitter as I feel inside from these attacks, this slander and this smearing, these inventions and all manner of nonsense, I am bearing this cross because I happen to occupy this position.

[Bokova] Following your speeches and answers to questions from correspondents, I have formed an opinion that you are very much a man of principle. What are the main principles of your life?

[Polozkov] You know, our generation grew up after the war. We have seen all hunger, cold, sacrifice, destruction. We have suffered a lot. But our generation was, it seems, fortunate in that we were educated in an honest way—through truthfulness, openness, kindness to people. I was raised by my mother—my father was killed in action in

1943. It must be my mother who imprinted these great human values in me so deeply. Now I see that they cannot be changed—I am already 56. So we Communists must not retreat and must not relinquish any of these common values of mankind, like decency, the sense of comradeship, kindness, and desire to help people, in any situation.

Yeltsin 9 March Speech Evokes Criticism

Accused of Return to 'Repressions'

PM1303103091 Moscow SOVETSKAYA ROSSIYA in Russian 12 Mar 91 First Edition p 3

[Letter from A.F. Zavidiya, president of the "Galand" interdepartmental diversified concern, as part of feature also incorporating text of B.N. Yeltsin's 9 March speech, under the general heading "Meeting at the Central House of Cinematographers 9 March," with introduction by SOVETSKAYA ROSSIYA Deputy Chief Editor Yu. Nikolayev: "Double Deception"]

[Text] [Nikolayev] He called on me at the editorial office after lunch on Saturday. He placed on the table the visiting card of Andrey Fedorovich Zavidiya, president of the "Galand" interdepartmental diversified concern, and the "credentials of a participant in the all-Russian meeting" at the Central House of Cinematographers, 9 March 1991. He announced:

"I have already written a letter to SOVETSKAYA ROSSIYA in connection with the failure of the recent supplementary elections to Moscow City Soviet. Today I decided to do the same thing, since I simply must express my personal attitude to the meeting in which I have just taken part."

Andrey Fedorovich extracted some rolled-up sheets of paper from his pocket.

"Look. It may be a bit chaotic, I just put down my impressions. But that's only natural: It was an instant response..."

I skimmed through the notes, and I must admit I was perplexed. At that time I had not yet heard Boris Nikolayevich Yeltsin's speech at the "all-Russian meeting," and the opinions of the businessman who was sitting in front of me seemed unjustified, and indeed too sharp. I told him so.

"If you had heard what he said and checked it against the demands of the Criminal Code..."

Neither the Criminal Code nor the text of the RSFSR [Russian Soviet Federated Socialist Republic] Supreme Soviet chairman's speech was on hand, so I was unable to compare or correlate them in any way.

I handed back Andrey Fedorovich's notes, advising him not to be too hasty, to cool down a little. I warned him: Everything he had written was very serious and imposed a very great responsibility on him, and I could not tell the editorial collegium to publish his notes. We agreed that I would try to study B.N. Yeltsin's speech, and he would reconsider every one of his arguments. If he did not change his mind, we would have an opportunity to come back to the question of publishing his observations. Yesterday the president of the "Galand" concern came back to the editorial office and said:

"I had no chance to speak at the 'all-Russian meeting,' although I sent the presidium notes requesting permission to speak and raised my hand. Please let me have a platform in the newspaper."

I therefore offer for the attention of readers the text of his confessional letter—by now quite lengthy—with some minor stylistic corrections.

[Zavidiya] I will not deny that I was very pleased to receive an invitation from the Russian Union of Private Property Owners to take part in a meeting with Boris Nikolayevich Yeltsin at the House of Cinema on 9 March. I know from my own experience how difficult it is to obtain an appointment with the republic's leaders. And I realize I can hardly expect it. They are busy people, obviously I am not the only person to have appealed to them for help... I was therefore glad of the opportunity to pour out my troubles to the RSFSR Supreme Soviet chairman himself. Especially since a great many questions have accumulated both in relation to the development of entrepreneurship in Russia, and in relation to the work of our own concern, a private firm set up by my wife and myself.

In general, I was in a good frame of mind when I arrived at the House of Cinema. This was not spoiled even by the fact that it turned out to be difficult to get into the building even if you had been specially invited. Before issuing your credentials as a participant, they checked that you were who you said you were and not someone else. But as the auditorium filled up, and I tried to find a place in the front row, a sense of anxiety was beginning to develop, as yet unrecognized, in my heart. Doubtless because of the great number of faces familiar from the TV screen and photographs in the newspapers and magazines. You did not have to be very perceptive to realize that there were not all that many of us private owners and cooperative members. The auditorium was filling up with the well-known Interregional Deputies' Group. And apart from Yeltsin, those taking their place on the stage included Tikhonov, Afanasyev, Ryzhov, Popov, Shatalin, Travkin... And yet, I repeat, I had been invited for a discussion between private owners and the head of the Russian legislature, not to take part in the interregional show.

But soon it became clear that no one there had any time for our worries anyway. One after another, speakers mounted the rostrum and enthusiastically shouted out their slogans, which are already pretty hackneyed from being used at the rallies that everyone is so sick and tired of. Even before, I had begun to notice the remarkable

paucity of new ideas among the publicity-seeking Interregional Group and their inability not only to implement but even to put forward practical, constructive proposals. But whereas at the start of its existence the Interregional Deputies' Group did at least propose some alternative solutions to particular problems in the implementation of economic and political reforms, later it stopped doing even that. In essence it reduced its entire "constructive" program to two or three postulates: "Down with the center," "Put the CPSU on trial," and "Let's ruin the state sector of the economy."

Before B.N. Yeltsin, about 12 people spoke. It is probably not worth even listing specifically who mounted the rostrum, because the reader will already be familiar with the circle of speakers at such "meetings." But I will give a few names, for the benefit of those who are less well-informed: Academicians Tikhonov and Shatalin, economist Selyunin, the priest Yakunin, the notorious Sulakshin, Chernichenko, and Travkin... The thrust of all the speeches was the same: Down with everything Soviet, socialist, organized... With maybe a few extra threats—famine, ruin, shortages...

Against this background of universally destructive voices, I think the speech by Yu. Shchekochikhin, president of our Union of Property Owners, stood out to advantage. He reminded us that we were supposed to be there to talk business, not to take part in a political show. But basically they did not let him say anything much. I also remember the speech by the priest Gleb Yakunin, mainly for its conventionality. He has apparently read somewhere in the scriptures that soviet power is allotted only 73 years and seven months, neither more nor less. In short, he prophesied a speedy end—if not the end of the world, then the end of the soviets at all levels.

With every new speaker my recent hopes of a serious approach to our problems and troubles plummeted. It was becoming perfectly obvious that we had been deceived, we had not been summoned in order to help promote entrepreneurship and commerce and overcome the difficulties that have arisen in movements that are new to society, but for entirely different purposes. This was doubly offensive because we—by which I mean the Russian Union of Property Owners—had agreed firmly when we formed our association: No politics! Ours is a union of business people, not a political club, and we are not going to take part in political maneuvers of any kind.

I will say more. At our "Galand" concern, and today it brings together 107,000 workers at private, cooperative, and state enterprises and organizations in various spheres, we have even deleted the section on the worker's political affiliation from our personnel questionnaires.

But a ray of hope still remained in my heart. I impatiently awaited Boris Nikolayevich Yeltsin's speech. I still hoped that he would get up now and call the extremists to order, and turn the discussion in the direction that we business people were hoping for. I was ready to record his speech verbatim. How bitter it was to be disappointed virtually from his very first words. As for extremism and trenchancy of judgments, he immediately went much further than the earlier speakers. These words of his had a particularly painful resonance. Many people, he said, "were elected deputies under the slogans of democrats, but in fact were traitors to democracy in their hearts." These deputies, he said, "became not merely neutral, they became enemies. If people call on me today: 'Boris Nikolayevich, invite the Six to visit you. Have a talk with them and maybe they will turn over a new leaf.' These people are enemies. You shouldn't embrace them, you should fight them. Even the women."

Obviously he was talking here about his deputies and the leaders of the Supreme Soviet chambers, who signed the well-known "Political Statement." But, to be honest, it sends a shiver down your spine. By that logic, he could brand as a traitor and enemy anyone who expresses any doubts about him personally or his ability to implement an effective state policy. And indeed, as I remember, the Six were much more tactful toward him, Boris Nikolayevich Yeltsin. And if you look into it, the only "fault" of the Six is that they expressed their disagreement with the flouting of the principles of collegiality and democracy in the running of the Supreme Soviet. And there you are—enemies!

Indeed, in general, we have seen it all before, as the saying goes, this division of Soviet people into "enemies" and "not enemies," back in the tragic year of 1937. Why is he reviving the methods and tactics of those terrible years of repressions? No doubt I was also affected by my nature as a businessman by education (I graduated from the Leningrad Institute of Soviet Trade) and by vocation. Immediately, and again later when I was at leisure, I was tormented by these questions: Who benefits by dividing us into enemies and not enemies, who gains what dividends from it? I have a far from smooth career behind me. I worked in the "Inturist" system, I was a department chief at the large Moscow production association "Borets." Six months before permission to engage in cooperative activity was officially granted, I organized and became head of what may have been the country's first large-scale cooperative, "Nash Soyuz." I set up and registered the country's first private firm (at least, I have not heard of anyone who was before me in this). Naturally, none of this was easy, I had to make my way through thousands of "no's" of every kind and convince hundreds of responsible and far from responsible officials at various levels. I was close to securing a deputy's seat, and was only prevented from doing so by a lack of organization, because of which the elections were ruined.

I am mentioning this now only to stress what is basically a simple point. My life, as the reader can see, has developed in such a way that I have acquired a huge number of acquaintances in virtually all social strata and groups in society. And I spent an entire day calling people on the telephone, trying to find out who, what group, what category of people would benefit from or

want the kind of taking of sides proposed quite specifically by Boris Nikolayevich Yeltsin. And I assure you, none of the dozens of people I spoke with supported the idea of dividing people into enemies and not enemies. The working man at "Borets" has a very different worry: that his plant might be halted as a result of the breaking of economic ties, thus depriving him of his already meager wages just when we are going over to the market system. The cooperative member does not need "political" enemies, he has plenty already: the racketeers, the bribe-takers who have access to raw materials and semifinished goods. For businessmen, entrepreneurs, and commercial people on a bigger scale, political quarrels, strikes, rally fever, and the endless war of laws all amount to a sharp knife that slashes to the quick the very idea of entrepreneurship.

And so it turns out that deliberately provoking political quarrels and encouraging confrontation and destabilization of the economy only benefits that pitiful handful of irresponsible loudmouths assembled in the auditorium, and, to all appearances, their leader.

It is staggering, but it is, as the saying goes, an inescapable fact. In the whole of his speech, which lasted nearly half an hour and was presumably a program statement, the RSFSR Supreme Soviet chairman did not say a single word behind which you could glimpse the slightest evidence of concern for the people over whom he exercises supreme power. I am a dealer, a private operator—some people still call people like me by these old names, not without disdain—and naturally I look for my own profit in everything. But I would never allow myself to adopt such a contemptuous attitude toward people who are to some degree dependent on me.

I admit what grated on me was not so much Boris Nikolayevich's openly expressed desire for even more power than he has today, but his very logic, the structure of his sentences, the totally unsubstantiated torrent, unsupported by any kind of argument, of harsh words arousing base passions. According to him, the president does nothing but "constantly deceive the people, and in particular democrats and democracy." His political opponents "spurn no methods. More persecution, slander, dirt..." The media print a "web of insinuations." But everyone now has the opportunity to study for himself the collection of invective and accusations totally unsubstantiated by facts. I would only ask you to pay particular attention to those points in Boris Nikolayevich's speech where he tries to construct some kind of chain of evidence. For instance, his discussion of the draft Union treaty.

"Today we have several dozen extremely serious comments to make on the draft Union treaty, starting with the title," he says. "In today's Constitution we have sovereign states, but in the new Union treaty even that has been struck out. It is a Union of Sovereign Republics now! But there is a great difference between a state and a republic." If the several dozen other "extremely serious comments" are of the same kind, they are not worth a dime. Any seventh-grade schoolchild knows that a republic or, say, a monarchy is a particular form of statehood. Neither more nor less. How can a politician of such stature not know this?

Indeed, the general impression is that Boris Nikolayevich has not bothered even to glance at the draft Union treaty. Otherwise he would have read in the very first sentence: "The sovereign states party to the treaty..." And later: "Each republic party to the treaty is a sovereign state." So it was hardly necessary to muddy the waters.

And again, the same old song: "The president deceived us when he said that nine-tenths of it had been agreed. Khasbulatov, the leader of the working group, did not sign on the part of Russia. And that is a case of juggling the facts." Boris Nikolayevich chose, for some reason, to keep quiet about the fact that the draft treaty was signed by the leaders of the RSFSR Supreme Soviet chambers. But it is not hard to guess why he kept quiet about that. Had he mentioned it, it would have been obvious to everyone who is deceiving whom, who is misrepresenting and juggling with the facts, and playing dirty.

It is also amazing to see how fiercely the Supreme Soviet chairman attacks the very fact of the draft's publication. In his opinion, you see, the wrong procedure was adopted here. Yet surely anyone can see that the draft is a draft, and was published specifically so that we citizens of the USSR would all have the opportunity to study it and take part collectively in finalizing the text of a future historic document.

Whatever paragraph you take in Boris Nikolayevich's speech, without fail you will find, if not blatant mendacity couched in unsubstantiated assertions, then at least insincerity, ignorance, and political deviousness. Except, perhaps, at those points where he does not deem it necessary to conceal his ambitions and true intentions. Notice the very vocabulary. Go over to "combat actions," join the "militant ranks," declare "war on the country's leadership," an "organized front," and so forth. A warlike cat among the pigeons!

And what is it all for? Boris Nikolayevich explained clearly why the "fronts," "militant ranks," "offensives," and "raising of fists" are needed: It is necessary to have "plenipotentiaries at grass roots in every soviet. The list already exists. The chairman of the Supreme Soviet would appoint the most reliable people directly, and they would carry out our policy and our laws at the local level. I do not agree that time has been lost as regards the transfer of land. No! We have a month left... We must make use of this month!" He also suggests how specifically this month should be "used." First, declare that all previously issued "acts on land use are considered invalid..." And who will distribute the land, who should be given this right? The chairman, Gavriil Kharitonovich Popov, obligingly shouted out: "Only your plenipotentiaries, Boris Nikolayevich, and no one else!"

So that is how it is planned to carry out what is, in effect, the forcible seizure of the land, of power... It is proposed in practice to exclude the soviets elected by the people, lest they get in the way.

As a commercial man, someone directly involved in business, I try to avoid coming into conflict with the law. And I understand very well that under Article 70 of the RSFSR Criminal Code "public calls for the violent overthrow or change of the Soviet state social system enshrined in the USSR Constitution, and also the dissemination of material with such content for this purpose, are punishable by up to three years' deprivation of liberty or a fine of up to 2,000 rubles. The same actions, if repeated or if carried out by an organized group of persons, are punishable by up to seven years' deprivation of liberty or a fine of up to 5,000 rubles."

The more I listened to the calls made by this man who calls himself a democrat, the stronger was my feeling that I myself, in such company, could find myself among an "organized group of persons" engaged in efforts to violently overthrow the existing system, if I did not get myself out of there in time.

Yet it seems that Boris Nikolayevich is not in the least worried about engaging in open propaganda of war against the government (Article 71 of the RSFSR Criminal Code) or urging the violent change of the social system. And why should it worry him, when the republic prosecutor is now "one of ours," in his—that is, Boris Nikolayevich Yeltsin's—pocket, and intends to bring cases not against him and his gang, but against party leaders who are at the same time soviet chairmen.

While he was saying that, I happened to catch N.I. Travkin's eye. It gave me the creeps: In five or six days, they will bind the hands of this twice-over people's deputy, and take him off to the investigator. Who else would they begin the reprisals with? After all, he is not just head of an obkom [oblast party committee], but of an entire party, and not just an individual soviet, but an entire committee in the RSFSR Supreme Soviet itself...

To conclude his speech B.N. Yeltsin called for the "unity of all democratic forces," but I was left with the impression that I had been present at the funeral of the very idea of the democratization of our life. I think any attentive reader of the leader's program speech will draw the same conclusion. And I was really horrified when "Golos Rossii" radio broadcast what was supposedly this same speech by Boris Nikolayevich, but with substantial cuts. Apparently some people still wanted to go on depicting him as a democrat...

Article Asks War Against Whom

91UN1057B Moscow SELSKAYA ZHIZN in Russian 12 Mar 91 p 2

[Article by V. Tsarev: "Democrats Declare War! On Whom?"]

[Text] **The question raised in the headline is not rhetorical; it is not some author's device for attracting the readers' attention. Unfortunately, this question was dictated by concrete circumstances and concrete events of recent days. And, above all, by the latest militant speech of B.N. Yeltsin, which he delivered to the public this time in the Moscow House of Cinema. And since on that day this speech was repeatedly broadcast on the radio stations of Russia, one might say that it was addressed to all Russians. Apparently this must be taken into account when dealing with it and evaluating it.**

I think that each of us will have to make the corresponding evaluation of this speech. Why? Because, in the first place, it pertains not to the shouts at rallies from some irresponsible politickers from the Democratic Union but a speech from the head of our largest republic—the Russian Federation. We will have to draw conclusions, in the second place, because this speech by B.N. Yeltsin is not simply a confirmation of judgments he has previously expressed about the nature of our social development, but essentially means entering a qualitatively new cycle of confrontation. Even as compared to the memorable interview on Central Television on 19 February of this year. Anyone familiar with the content of Saturday's speech could not have failed to notice this. For those who have not yet had occasion to hear or read it, we shall quote the main, key points of this extraordinary statement.

Where did Boris Nikolayevich begin? Having reminded the audience that it was here, in this hall, that the Interregional Deputy Group began, the speaker noted that "during this time the democratic movement has been very greatly transformed."

What can you say—a very fair statement! We all see and hear this clearly. Of course, it has been a long time since, glued to our television sets, with the profoundest hope for a speedy renewal of the society, we paid attention to our people's deputies. Including those who were soon to form the Moscow Deputy Group. In the words of our elected officials who for the first time were delegated to congresses and supreme soviets on a truly democratic basis, we were attracted by the bold and extraordinary nature of their judgments, and their sincere sounding concern for resolutely overcoming the unseemly legacy of the times of the cult and stagnation and building our life on the basis of extensive democratization and civil liberties, on the basis of a radical renewal of the economic model of society, under conditions of the supremacy of the law inherent in a civilized rule-of-law state. It is no secret that we were called to all of this by the course toward perestroyka proclaimed as early as April 1985. In the people's deputies we saw the statesmen, invested with the confidence of the people, who could embody the language of political slogans and our expectations in effective new power structures and new laws with creative force, and create conditions for their practical implementation in all spheres of the economic, state, and spiritual life of the society. You might say that was the dawn of our democratization.

B.N. Yeltsin is right—during this time the democratic movement has been greatly transformed. One cannot but agree with this. The differences are revealed elsewhere: Which changes in the democratic movement should be considered truly creative and imbued with the spirit of freedom and which lead to prohibition of nonconformity and to a new cult and dictatorship.

We would like to invite the readers to figure all this out in detail and calmly. Recall that in the aforementioned recent interview B.N. Yeltsin clearly stated that he had made his political choice, that he had separated himself from the policy of President M.S. Gorbachev and demanded his retirement. It seemed to many at that time that it was simply a matter of opposition between two leaders, that all they had to do was "meet each other half way" and everything would return to harmony and friendly work in the interests of the whole society.

But today, when considering the latest speech of the head of the Russian legislature there are probably few who would doubt that the crux of the matter is not confrontation between the leaders. No, this is much deeper and more complicated. This is a conflict of two diametrically opposed approaches to the understanding of democracy, to the vision of the paths of development of the society in general. On the one hand there is the course toward political pluralism, toward real freedom of speech expressed in the Law on the Press and in practice in the stage-by-stage implementation of the policy of a multi-structured economy with comprehensive social protection of the population. On the other hand there is the kind of "democracy" that categorically refuses to tolerate either different kinds of thinking or political pluralism. And the kind of restructuring of the economy that urges the society to dive headlong into the market without looking back, to open space for "liberalization of prices," but actually, with the present deficit, this means unrestricted growth, from which the unprotected segments of the society, to put it mildly, have nothing to gain.

Let us see how democracy and political pluralism look through the eyes of the leader of Russian democracy, personified by the passions of rallies along with democracy itself. (Let us note in parenthesis that the slogans "Protect Democracy, Protect Yeltsin" that dotted Manezhnaya Square clearly recalled another, equally expressive cry: "For the Homeland, for Stalin.")

And so B.N. Yeltsin has the floor.

"...Do not forget that many have come or were elected as deputies under the slogans of democrats but in spirit they are traitors to democracy. They showed their true faces later. But they took our whole program. They went to the voters and spoke and campaigned with this program. They swore to the voters that they would carry out this program, but after a certain amount of time they completely rejected this program. They did not simply become neutral, they became enemies. If they call on me today and say 'Boris Nikolayevich, invite these six to see you. Speak with them and maybe somehow they will change their ways.' These are enemies. We should not embrace them, we should fight them. Even if they are women."

How this reminds us of the infamous saying of the thirties: "Whoever is not with us is against us!" And this is what the democrats are saying?! Is this not what the Lithuanian Sajudis members are saying when they trample on their own initially proclaimed goals—democracy and perestroyka? And today they have established a system of unbridled terror against anyone who does not accept the course of the national separatists—they are proclaimed "enemies of the nation!" That is in Lithuania, whose leaders are already getting fitted for brown shirts. And now, it turns out, our six courageous people's deputies who, from the podium of the RSFSR Supreme Soviet, dared to tell the truth about the confrontational policy of its chairman, which is actually leading to the breakdown of economic times in the country and a war between law and chaos in the society—these deputies have "become enemies." So who is turning away from the road to democratization onto the path of political terror?

In his speech B.N. Yeltsin tries to place the people who think as he does in the position of the accused.

"A powerful attack has been waged against us for a long time," he asserts, "in various forms, including in the mass media. And they do not shrink before any methods. Again there is the badgering, the smut, the mudslinging—it is all coming down on our heads, and more and more with each passing day. But we get up, wipe ourselves off, and wait for the next attacks."

Let me say frankly that the majority of people who write to SELSKAYA ZHIZN are of a different opinion. They are surprised and, moreover, disturbed by the long-suffering of other political figures, against whom the "democratic" press, and also certain deputies who count themselves among the democratic movement, allow such attacks, which would never be tolerated by any Western democratic power. But ours allows this, still placing its hopes in finding a consensus. But what kind of consensus is it if they, the "democrats," declare war against it, the highest authority! The following, if you please, is from the same speech:

"...It is time for us to go on the offensive. Democracy is in danger. The miners are calling us to this. It is considerably more difficult for them than it is for all of us sitting in this hall. They are actually doing what must be done now. In practice! Including the fact that pressure is being placed on them, the fact that the mass media are beginning to make all kinds of insinuations about them, that the leaders of the Karagandaugol association brought action against the striking miners before hand (it is in the papers today), and offered them 9 million rubles... This is the path the party leadership, the country's leadership has taken. I do not think we, and especially the miners, can forgive this disgrace. The

miners have motivated us to take these militant actions. Let us join their militant ranks and help them (as they are helping us) and declare war against the country's leadership, which is leading us into a swamp."

There it is: Everything is simple and clear... But is it true? At the very time when the country's leaders are making desperate efforts to prevent the dissolution of contractual ties, not to allow the conveyor belts and rolling mills to shut down and clog up the coking batteries and central heat and electric power stations, the highest state and political leader of Russia declares a war on them. In defense of democracy...

Yes, of course, things are difficult for the miners, their wages do not compensate for their physical and moral expenditures, and in many places they really have no life. Yes, they deserve a better lot in life and have the right to make their demands to the authorities. Nobody has any doubt about that. And it would be naive to think that their action is merely the result of the agitation on the part of the "democratic" emissaries, including from the Russian parliament. But still these emissaries are acting—and that is no secret either. And the head of the parliament is doing his bit here: They, the striking miners, "are doing what must be done now. In practice!" As if the Russian Government did not and could not have any other ways of resolving the conflict.

Democracy has indeed been placed in jeopardy. But it is certainly not because any of the newspapers have criticized B.N. Yeltsin or G.Kh. Popov, A.A. Sobchak, or I.I. Zaslavskiy or allowed the readers to express their opinions about them in the press. Over our still weak democracy hangs a deadly threat from the destructive actions of those who equate democracy with the name of Yeltsin.

I cannot forget how last Sunday at a rally "in defense of Yeltsin, in defense of democracy" near the Kremlin walls, throughout the entire square one could hear the hostile warning from the organizers of the rally to the RSFSR people's deputies who intend to gather on 28 March here, in the Kremlin, at their extraordinary congress. Calling for all champions of democracy to gather there on Manezhnaya Square again on that day, the voice from the loudspeaker, not concealing the threats, emphasized: Let every deputy feel the pressure of the Moscow citizens who have gathered next to the Kremlin. I will not vouch for the exact wording of the phrase, but its threatening meaning has been conveyed correctly. I would like to ask this "democrat" what the justification would be for the people's deputies from all corners of Russia, forgetting about the mandates from their own constituents, to conform to the mob passions of the Muscovites. And if this is called democracy, what, then, is mob terrorism?

Workers and all residents of rural areas have just as much right as the workers of other branches of the national economy to make their demands both to the deputies and to the government. And their labor, let us remind the organizers of the rally, is not a great deal easier than that of the miners or metallurgists. It is not without reason that after the constructive debates in the country's Supreme Soviet, workers of a number of agricultural professions were given the right to obtain a pension early, along with the miners. And the people need their products no less than they need coal and steel, machines and instruments, clothing and footwear, assembly halls and housing. So why call for the Muscovites not to consider the will and the demands of the peasantry and thus essentially deny them their constitutional right to representation in parliament? Or did you know that the patience of the agricultural workers can run out too?

As they say, God forbid that, following the miners, workers of the agroindustrial complex also begin "to do what is necessary" "in practice!"—stop milking and feeding the cows, repairing the technical equipment for planting, preparing seeds... Or at least turn off the faucet from the animal husbandry farms and complexes to the city food stores and enterprises of the processing industry. And I must report that hints of this can be seen in the editorial mail. People are writing: We have been going for some time now without industrial products; let us see how the cities will make out without our deliveries!

It is good that, when speaking to the city dwellers at the Cinema House, B.N. Yeltsin, unlike the organizers of the rally on Manezhnaya Square, did not forget to discuss the problems bothering the peasantry and the question of land reform and ways of carrying it out. And although the speaker approached them somewhat indirectly, while discussing the power structure in the republic, they were still not left out in the cold. It seems that our readers would like to know everything in the speech that pertained to the peasant problem. We shall give a verbatim transcript of those passages, including the approaches to the subject that interests the readers.

"I am in favor of direct election of the president. I said this before the elections as well. But I am in favor of having the entire structure of authority be supported by the people in the same way. That is, all representatives of the soviets should be elected directly. In the first place, then traitors would not be allowed to pass through; the people would see right through them. In the second place, there would be a strong executive and legislative power in the local areas. We would know through whom we should take action. Now the soviets are the only organs we can count on to carry our privatization and allot land to the peasant farms. Volgograd Oblast has already created 1,500 Western-style farms because it has a good soviet. Makharadze, the chairman of the soviet, says: 'I am not subordinate to the first secretary, I do not go to him. Let him come to me.' And immediately after the presidential elections we must declare elections of this kind for the representatives of the soviets. Then we will have reliable people. But for now we have reason (someone spoke here) to have authorized representatives in the local areas in each soviet. We already have a list. The most reliable people will be approved directly by the

chairman of the Supreme Soviet and they will implement our policy and our laws in the local areas.

"I do not agree that the time has passed for turning over the land. No! There is still a month left, true, a month—at most. But we must take advantage of this month! We have a law on the Western-style farm, we have a law on land reform. If we need some document that would regulate who should turn the land over to whom, we could literally solve this problem on Monday or Tuesday by a joint decision of the Presidium of the Supreme Soviet and the Presidium of the Council of Ministers of the Russian Federation. We can resolve the problem and determine the deadline. In March-April we could give a garden, orchard, plot, or Western-style farm to anyone who wants one. And we must also determine responsibility in the event that someone is sabotaged somewhere. And the most important thing for us to determine in the document... (unintelligible). There is the land use act. We must say that within a certain period of time these land use documents are considered invalid and must be issued again to all land users."

Such is the train of thought of the leader of the RSFSR Supreme Soviet regarding peasant questions. Not all of it is comprehensible but the very fact that he has paid attention to them, it seems, will be greeted with understandable interest in the rural areas. Indeed, the slowness in implementing the land reform is unforgivable. It is a great pity that the winter months that have passed since the adoption by the Russian legislature of a number of laws that are very important to the peasants, have been allowed to pass by wit' out accomplishments in many places. Planting time is coming soon. And it would seem that now, right before spring, is not the time to get into a polemical frenzy about dividing up the land; we must make sure that it is not neglected: For instance, if the land is taken away from one user and given to another one who does not have time to assimilate and so it is left unused. It would not be a bad thing now, in the middle of March, to recall the bitter lessons of last autumn. Was it not in Moscow at that time that the city authorities, distracted by rallies, laid down the law saying that they should not make residents of rural areas dependent—let them shift for themselves?! And they did not want to pay any attention to the fact that the kolkhozes and sovkhozes of the surrounding areas had planted their fields with the idea in mind that the city residents would participate in the harvest. And when the Moscow authorities came to their senses it was too late—a considerable share of the crop was overtaken by winter. Now we must not miss the mark with the re-allotment! The future farmer is not likely to be satisfied with the month left to him by nature. Spring is a serious time in the fields. One would like to think that this is understood in the local areas and they will not resort to irresponsible behavior. Another thing is more dangerous: The preceding excerpt from the speech contains the intention to satisfy political desires by replacing legally elected soviets with authorized representatives.

Authorized representatives—and one must assume that the former eminent party leader is well aware of the memories the "authorized" oblast and rayon party committees have left behind them in the rural areas. They are the ones who gave orders to everyone without taking specific responsibility for anything. And the party has resolutely condemned its own previous practice. Is this really the time to resurrect the institution of authorized representatives, not from the party committee but "from yours personally?"

Our rural residents are disturbed by something else as well. Here comes an authorized representative and declares the land use documents to be invalid after a certain period of time, and then the kolkhoz or sovkhoz [collective or state farm] has to decide whether or not it is worthwhile to plant its fields, which might end up in someone else's hands. Incidentally, the democrats have a good deal to think about here as well. Indeed, how does one coordinate this crude reapportionment of the land with the laws adopted quite recently within the walls of the "White House on Krasnopresnensk Embankment?" To abide by the norms of democracy is to abide by them not in words but in deeds!

But so far, judging from the entire mood of B.N. Yeltsin's speech, for him March is by no means a month of concern for the land, the planting, and the future harvest—it is a time of endless inflammation of the confrontation in all areas.

In the first place, by departing from his intention of not being dependent on any party while in the post of chairman of the RSFSR Supreme Soviet, in his speech on Saturday Yeltsin plainly declared his intention to "create a powerful, organized party"—on the basis of Democratic Russia.

In the second place, in spite of his verbal assurances of devotion to the Union of the republics, B.N. Yeltsin is calling for people to say "No" to this Union in the Unionwide referendum on 17 March. In this connection, reservations that could deceive the listeners seem strange. "In our present Constitution," he says, "we have sovereign states, and even this is eliminated in the Union treaty." Although in reality the first line of this document, published on 9 March, says: "Sovereign states are participants in the treaty..." and further: "Each republic that is a participant in the treaty is a sovereign state..." So why make a complaint about the draft document in this regard?! And why do we hear again: "We do not need this kind of center—immense and bureaucratic. We do not need ministries, we do not need all of this immense bureaucratic machine which has been sending stern orders from above to below for more than 70 years now. We must get rid of this." How are we supposed to regard all these statements about the intention to preserve the 70-year-old bureaucratic machine when the published draft of the Union treaty strictly specifies the authority of the USSR and—which is especially important—the authority is delegated to it with the agreement of the republics included in the federation and by no means

imposed "from above." No, the head of the Russian state does not want to see any of this; his speech is filled with passionate accusations against the center: "This turned out to be a lie. We were deceived... That was a lie... We will not give in... Now we can expect all kinds of dirty tricks." And it turns out that of the nine republics that participated in the preparation of the Union treaty, eight of them including the center are not keeping pace, and only the head of the Russian legislature is keeping pace...

When you read the lines presented above and others from Yeltsin's speech you think about the meaning of his appeals to declare war against the government and follow the example of the miners who declared the strike—and you think: Against whom is he ultimately declaring war? Who will stand to lose from this? The answer is as clear as a March day—this will be a war of the "democrats" against the people themselves. Both against that part of them who will not accept a policy that is destructive to the country, that is striving for absolute power of the "democratic" leaders, and against that part of them who for now are in the grips of the poverty that has rained down upon the country, and in their blindness are prepared to "raise their fists" and to create a "common front."

But perhaps we have had enough frontline terminology, we have had enough militant destructive appeals, which can turn into innumerable additional disasters for our people. True, it is difficult to count on the good sense of the democratic "leaders" at this time. But history teaches us that even in the most difficult situation, the good sense of the people will take the upper hand. And we shall hope that the month of March will be a month not of destructive chaos but of consolidation of the forces of the people in the name of creative goals.

Other Speakers at Meeting Cited

91UN1096B Moscow SOVETSKAYA ROSSIYA in Russian 14 Mar 91 First Edition p 3

[Unattributed report: "'The Ruling Class—This Means Us'"]

[Text] Readers have displayed great interest in the full text of B.N. Yeltsin's speech at the meeting of representatives of the Democratic Russia movement in the House of Cinema on 9 March, which was published in SOVETSKAYA ROSSIYA on 12 March. Readers have called us requesting that we publish the speeches of other Democratic Russia figures also, which would provide a clearer picture of who's who. Accommodating readers' wishes, we publish fragments of certain speeches recorded by a participant in the meeting.

V. SELYUNIN, economist, commentator:
"As of the present time the democrats have done extremely little. Economic reform has not been implemented, the land issue has not been settled, enterprises have not been privatized. Russia does not have its own currency, and for this reason it is losing the economic war which the center is waging against it. The communists will not give back the land since ownership is the basis of their well- being."

V. TIKHONOV, chairman of the Co-Operators Union:
"The democratic movement should be based on business people, on the private enterprise sector. The Russian leadership must stop speaking about equal support for all forms of ownership and accentuate attention and resources on assistance to the tenant farmers, leaseholders, and private tradesmen. It is essential to disband the collective and state farms and re-allot the land. I am not a supporter and not an admirer of the talent of Lenin as a theoretician but I would like to say that as a tactician and organizer he was a gifted man, although unscrupulous and shameless, like all politicians, and to recall his apt words: 'The new social structure may arise only given the material and financial support of the ruling class.' The ruling class—if we look to the future, this means us."

Ye. AMBARTSUMOV, people's deputy of the Russian Soviet Federated Socialist Republic:
"Gorbachev has recently been urging a unification of all forces. Our goal is to create a powerful opposition democratic movement, in opposition to Gorbachev, Pugo, Yazov, Pavlov....

"I call on all Western correspondents and Western society to note the new processes which are occurring in our country. Gorbachev is now played out as a democratic leader.

"Gorbachev has become a voluntary hostage of the neo-Stalinist movement. I would like to now call on the West: 'Do not put all your eggs in the Gorbachev basket.'"

N. SHMELEV, economist:
"It is essential to look ahead. The Soviet state and the Soviet economy are practically a corpse. It is now essential to adopt measures in the economy which produce results as quickly as possible. It is essential by any means to reduce the budget deficit and release onto the market mobilization reserves to avert famine."

L. BATKIN, member of the Democratic Russia Coordinating Council:
"We have been suffering defeat since last October. We are remaining in these bodies merely in order to conduct a struggle. It is essential to explain to the population what we will do the morning after we have come to power.

"If a Union treaty is really signed, the next day we must compose the powers of a structure not connected with this treaty, that is, a Supreme Soviet and president, which are not envisaged by this treaty....

"It is essential to think over and prepare a two-hour warning strike on 26 March, on the eve of the opening of the congress, which wishes to remove Yeltsin.

"After his election, Yeltsin played the part of a leader above parties and above factions. Such tactics were for a

while justified. Since October, when it became clear that an agreement with Gorbachev was unthinkable, these have been the wrong tactics. The Supreme Soviet is presently blocking Yeltsin's actions.

"He must occupy an independent position, as if he were already president of Russia."

S. SHATALIN, academician:
"I have made my choice and will see it through to the end. In order to fight, a strong party or movement is needed, and it is essential to set aside all our disagreements. We cannot at this time be measuring ourselves by fame or authority, everyone needs to unite, or we will be strangled one by one."

Article Views Yeltsin Television Address

PM1403161491 Moscow MOSCOW NEWS in English No 9, 3-10 Mar 91 p 7

[Nikolay Shmelev article: "Hot Under the Collar"]

[Text] I doubt there is a definite plan to remove Boris Yeltsin from the political arena. But we all see the confrontation between Gorbachev and Yeltsin being exacerbated, while the nation is in dire need of cooperation between the two men. In today's circumstances the victory of one will spell a defeat for the nation. Theirs is a fight with no winners: should Yeltsin lose, Gorbachev will lose too. Being hot under the collar can only bring closer a political paralysis and, hence, the end of all reforms.

One can't fail to see that people are sick and tired, however crude this may sound, of all political moves and empty talk, of the old conservatives and the new democrats. The people are tired of watching a battle royale of feeble politicians who can't change anything on their own.

The people pine for tangible, even if minute, improvements. If one is to be honest in answering the question: "What have the national and the Russian parliaments done for the people?", one will have to admit the bitter truth: "Nothing". The freedom of ardent public speeches is no better than the calls to suppress this freedom.

Therefore, I say that the televised speech by the Chairman of the Russian parliament has won him no victories even if it lost him no battles.

The national leadership is turning to the right. It's easy to guess what may fllow: a step-by-step movement towards a dictatorship and blood. There are only two forces that can reverse the movement. The first is an elemental popular uprising—God forbid, for nothing can be more horrible in Russia! The second is well-organized resistance on the part of the Republics. A "horizontal" union of the four largest Soviet Republics seemed to be in the making, but the effort has stalled. Kravchuk and Nazarbayev, the top men in the Ukraine and Kazakhstan, seem to support the general policy of the Russian leadership, although they don't thirst for Gorbachev's blood. Their outlooks seem quite logical to me. Yeltsin meanwhile, would fare better from consistent opposition to the Rightist .rends, rather than from hasty statements.

Despite the mighty pressure on the part of the Centre, the reformists are still strong, especially in the economic sphere. The Russian leader should have been honest on the issue of Premier Pavlov's vicious attempt to rob the people of their hard-earned money. It was easy to prove that all Pavlov's arguments were faulty and his intentions unpredictable and therefore dangerous. The world has known for decades healthy methods of improving one's financial standing: you don't have to slaughter a sheep before you shear it. The Russian leader should have taken the lead in the effort to give the lie to the accusations of a "conspiracy" on the part of Western banks. For this accusation would suffice to undermine the Soviet Union's credibility: Western bankers are very sensible people who don't want to risk their money on the upkeep of something that increasingly resembles a lunatic asylum.

Yeltsin could have undertaken to defend the army, the officers and the men in need of help, not the top brass, rather than have the initiative slip from his hands and into the hands of Col. Alksnis and Col. Petrushenko. Had Yeltsin done this, his rating would have skyrocketed.

Yeltsin's televised speech and the well-orchestrated wave of "indignation" that followed it can't do any great harm to his popularity, of course. It looks like his opponents have learned no lessons from the past: every attack by the Centre on the man helps him find more sympathizers. Unexpected help came from the "little man" who spoke in the Presidium of the Russian Federation's Supreme Soviet, for the electorate will certainly view his speech as slander or provocation. But you can't say no all the time. Once in a while you have to say a constructive yes if you don't want to see the people rise up and throw out all politicians.

An all-out war can only play into the reactionaries' hands.

Yeltsin Meets Kuzbass Worker Representatives

91P50123A Moscow TRUD in Russian 12 Mar 91 p 1

[Unattributed article: "B.N. Yeltsin's Meetin with Representatives of the Kuzbass Worker Collectives Council"]

[Text] On 11 March a meeting took place at the Russian Soviet Federated Socialist Republic [RSFSR] House of Soviets between RSFSR Supreme Soviet Chairman B.N. Yeltsin and representatives of the workers' committees of the Kuzbass. Chairmen of the miners' strike committees A.V. Malykhin, V.A. Bender, B.P. Yerofeyev, V.A.

Kuzin, V.A. Lyubimkin, and A.I. Sonin took part. This was reported by the RSFSR Supreme Soviet Presidium press service.

At the meeting opinions were exchanged on a broad range of problems of the political and socioeconomic situation in the country. Issues on the possible changeover of the mining and metallurgical sectors of the Kuzbass from Union jurisdiction to Russian were also discussed. The miners' representatives also reported the demands which the collectives had put before the Union leadership.

Responding to a question on his attitude toward the continuing miners' strikes, B.N. Yeltsin emphasized that the decision on the choice of form for fighting for their demands was a matter for the labor collectives themselves.

The representatives of the workers' committees of the Kuzbass stated their complete support for the RSFSR Supreme Soviet chairman's political position and their readiness "to defend it with all available non-violent means."

Isayev on USSR Treaty, Dispute With Yeltsin

PM1803091991 Moscow KRASNAYA ZVEZDA in Russian 14 Mar 91 First Edition p 1, 2

[Interview with B.M. Isayev, RSFSR Supreme Soviet deputy chairman, by Captain 3d Rank V. Yermolin on 6 March; place of interview not given; published under the rubric "Union Treaty: View from Republics:" "Russia's Fate Is the Fate of the Union"]

[Excerpts] B.M. Isayev, deputy chairman of the RSFSR [Russian Soviet Federated Socialist Republic] Supreme Soviet, answers questions from our correspondent. [passage omitted]

[Yermolin] You have described your attitude to the Union treaty sufficiently clearly, but another question is also important: What will be the fate of the treaty within the walls of the Russian legislature? After all, the alignment of forces in the Supreme Soviet, and in general within Russia's deputy corps, is such today that it is impossible to forecast with confidence the outcome of any vote, and especially a vote on such a fundamental question.

[Isayev] Yes, confrontation is a fairly frequent phenomenon in our legislature. Recent sittings have been particularly stormy. But you know, when it is a question of fateful solutions, common sense as a rule always prevails, and deputies are able to reach a consensus. I am hoping that the debates on the Union treaty, too, will take place in an atmosphere of, let's say, enhanced responsibility. Therefore I am expecting a positive result. You will remember that originally it was not planned to discuss the question of the Union treaty at the Second Extraordinary Congress of People's Deputies, but subsequently, at deputies' request, it was included on the agenda. By decision of the Congress a Union treaty preparatory commission has been set up, and this, in my opinion, testifies convincingly to the tremendous importance which RSFSR deputies attach to this question. No, I do not believe that the Russian legislature will block the decision on the Union treaty. I am an optimist in this respect.

[Yermolin] But on the other hand, we are all able to see clearly today how a number of Russia's people's deputies are urging their fellow citizens in public statements, and in the press, radio, and television, to say "NO" to the Union treaty.

[Isayev] It is true that advocates of the anti-Union position have noticeably stepped up their activities. They should realize that by conducting this campaign they are undermining the foundations of the state and introducing alarm, confusion, and discord into people's hearts. What can this lead to? Only to an even bigger split in society and to the creation of an atmosphere in which neither normal labor nor normal life are possible. It is difficult to comprehend how it is possible to be an enemy of one's own people. Our state grew up over millenia, yet certain "reformers" are trying to break it up with incomprehensible ease.

[Yermolin] Nonetheless, let us return to the sources of your optimism. After the Political Statement of the "Six," which you too signed, it is possible to envisage all kind of scenarios of the development of events, especially within the legislature. The RSFSR Supreme Soviet's ability to function will be largely determined also by the style of B.N. Yeltsin's conduct toward his opponent deputy chairmen.

[Isayev] I have not yet spoken to Boris Nikolayevich, and as far as I know, neither have any of the others who signed the statement (this is as of 6 March—V.Ye.). First he was touring the republic, and then he went down with influenza. However, I believe that he understands well the importance of businesslike relations between members of both the Supreme Soviet Presidium and the Supreme Soviet as a whole. Incidentally, despite all the different views as regards B.N. Yeltsin's political line, we, all the members of the Supreme Soviet Presidium, continue to cooperate normally. This bears no relation to the atmosphere of psychosis which is sometimes felt outside the walls of the legislature. And I, for one, fail to comprehend the stormy reaction to our statement. We have stated our position honestly and directly. We have stated it because our continued silence made us party to a policy, as it were, which the chairman of the RSFSR Supreme Soviet Presidium has been conducting of late with absolutely no consultation with us, his deputies. We were simply "excluded" from the work which actually determines the policy of the Supreme Soviet.

You only have to mention the RSFSR Supreme Soviet chairman's Coordinating and Consultative Council. We have no access to this organ, all its decisions are made behind closed doors. It is by no means a question of

decisions on issues of secondary importance. What kind of structure is this, formed by B.N. Yeltsin's will alone, and with what functions is it invested? We Russian Supreme Soviet Presidium members who signed the statement are ignorant of all this. Can this situation be regarded as normal? This is why we issued the Political Statement. We are proposing an open, honest discussion at the Extraordinary Congress of RSFSR People's Deputies on where Russia should go from here. An account of the Supreme Soviet chairman is also overdue, and deputies have stored up many questions which they want to ask him. All this by no means signifies that we are seeking Boris Nikolayevich's resignation. What we are seeking is clarity in our relations, clarity in the definition of the Russian leadership's future political course. Furthermore, I, for example, believe that if we are really building a rule-of-law, democratic state, then it is necessary to be able to tolerate different opinions without putting settling of personal accounts first and foremost in affairs of the state.

[Yermolin] Boris Mikhaylovich, to return to the Union treaty, is it possible to assume, in view of the existence of the Coordinating and Consultative Council, that the fate of the Union Treaty could also be decided outside the Russian legislature?

[Isayev] Unquestionably it is possible to discuss the most varied issues at sessions of such an organ which is outside the Supreme Soviet's control. But we are convening the Extraordinary Congress precisely in order to work all this out, to find a mode of cooperation acceptable to all the legislative currents, and to rule out the very possibility of a situation arising where the fate of Russia would be determined by anyone other than the people's representatives.

[Yermolin] Boris Mikhaylovich, now a traditional KRASNAYA ZVEZDA question: What is your stance on the creation of republic armed forces?

[Isayev] My attitude is clear-cut. I am against splitting up our Army into national "compartments." This could be taken as far as dividing up the nuclear potential. No, a unitary Soviet Union must also have a single army. And it has to be treated as one of the main pillars of statehood. Certain specific security functions must, of course, remain under republic jurisdiction. However, I repeat, only a single Soviet Army equipped with everything it needs and protected against defamation and attacks can defend us reliably.

[Yermolin] The interview was ready for printing when B.N. Yeltsin, chairman of the RSFSR Supreme Soviet, speaking at the House of Cimena 9 March, defined with utmost clarity his positions both in respect of the Union Treaty and the authors of the Political Statement, whom he described as enemies point-blank. In this context we have asked B.M. Isayev to add a few words to his interview. In particular, the following question has arisen: Does Boris Mikhaylovich feel less optimistic and hopeful now as regards a peaceful outcome of the legislative debate on the Union treaty?

[Isayev] Speaking on his own behalf Yeltsin is free to say anything he likes. Especially now that he has his "own" prosecutor. I will say just one thing: Let the Congress decide who is right and who is wrong. We must make sure that the rule of law triumphs always and in everything so that people are not tempted "to improve life" by means of the fist. Boris Nikolayevich has once again decided to divide the people into enemies and his own people. Is this normal? No, despite everything, I believe in the common sense of my colleague deputies, and therefore I remain an optimist.

Western Republics

Referendum Voting in West Republics Reported

LD1703204391 Moscow TASS International Service in Russian 1433 GMT 17 Mar 91

[By TASS correspondent]

[Text] Moscow, 17 Mar (TASS)—The all-Union referendum is taking place in the Ukraine today in a businesslike atmosphere. According to the figures of the Central Republican Commission for the USSR Referendum, by 1200 about 18 million people had participated in the referendum on the territory of the Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic, or 47 percent of the total number of those eligible to vote.

Each voter is being given an additional ballot paper with the question: "Do you agree that the Ukraine should be a part of a Union of Soviet sovereign powers on the basis of the Ukraine's declaration of state sovereignty?" Regional polls are also taking place in a number of oblasts in the west of the republic.

Leonid Kravchuk, chairman of the Ukrainian Supreme Soviet, told Soviet and foreign journalists after he had cast his vote: "I have voted for the type of Union in which the Ukraine would be a sovereign state with comprehensive rights, a state which would be master on its own land."

All of the 601 polling stations in the capital of Belorussia are working, and every voter is receiving just one ballot paper—no additional republican or regional polls are being carried out.

A few days before the start of the referendum, several parties and public organizations made appeals and statements to the republic's citizens. Thus, a joint appeal from the presidium of the Supreme Soviet, the Central Committee of the Communist Party, and the Council of Ministers of Belorussia called upon voters to say "yes" to a renewed Union. The republican Federation of Trade Unions, the Christian Union of Belorussia, and a number of other organizations also expressed their support for the renewed Union. At the same time, the

leadership of the Belorussian People's Front, the Peasants' Party, and other opposition organizations called upon their supporters to vote "against."

The situation remains tense in Moldova where the Supreme Soviet decided not to hold the USSR referendum on the republic's territory. Military units and military commissariats in the republic, where, according to Union law, polling stations for the USSR referendum have been set up, have today found themselves in a real state of siege. As a TASS correspondent reports, the actions of supporters of the People's Front who are opposed to voting seems well coordinated. Of the 17 military registration and enlistment offices where polling stations have been set up, 15 have been blockaded, and similar actions have been undertaken against practically all the other military units. A group of Moldovans have torn up the USSR flag near the enrance to the compound of an Interior Ministry regiment in Kishinev, provoking the servicmen to clash with them. Nevertheless, tens of thousands of people have already voted; there should have been many more of them, however many who wanted to express their will have been subjected to threats. There are incidents of people being beaten up.

Army Aide Denies 'Rumor' on Moldova Deployment

PM1703185991 Moscow KRASNAYA ZVEZDA in Russian 16 Mar 91 First Edition p 3

[Colonel N. Mulyar report: " 'Spicy Rumor' From Moldova President's Office"]

[Text] Certain mass media, including KOMSOMOLSKAYA PRAVDA, have circulated a MOLDOVA-PRESS report in which D. Tsyga, press secretary to the republic's president, claims that additional military formations armed with automatic rifles have been deployed in 15 rayon centers in Moldova; and that a field headquarters complete with the relevant communications equipment has been stationed in Yedintsy, a city in the north of the republic. The report also says that there is information "that a mass mobilization of reservists will be carried out in the republic to oblige them to take part in the holding of the Union referendum in field-exercise conditions." It is reported that a convoy of around 50 armored personnel carriers and GAZ-66 trucks went from the direction of Tiraspol in the direction of the Drokiya City during the night of 13 March. All the vehicles contained servicemen armed with automatic rifles who have been assigned to military commissariats for the duration of the exercises. Other examples are also cited.

I asked Lieutenant General A. Sergeyev, chief of staff of the Odessa Military District, to comment on this report:

"I want to state officially that none of the extra military formations that the press secretary is talking about has been or is planned to be brought onto the republic's territory, and the same goes for the mobilization of reservists. Nor has a large convoy of armed servicemen moved in the direction of Drokiya. The claim that a field headquarters complete with the relevant communications equipment has been deployed in Yedinsty is also farfetched. All that I can tell you is that the referendum is being held in military units by decision of the USSR president. In areas where there are no military units electoral precincts have been installed at military commissariats to enable military commissariat workers and their families to vote along with anyone else who so desires. In all, 18 radio stations plus crews have been placed in military commissariats across Moldova for the prompt collection of information on the course of the referendum. Furthermore, according to the plan approved back in December, what is happening in the republic's military commissariats currently is not exercises but staff training involving map reading [otrabotka dokumentov na kartakh]. The plans do not include sending people out into the field or the deployment of centers for the reception of personnel, equipment, and so forth. Therefore everything that the press secretary has said above is an utter fabrication. It is distressing that it emanates from the president's office and is misleading public opinion."

Kiev Court Clears Gromov of Coup Allegations

LD1503124991 Moscow Central Television First Program Network in Russian 1200 GMT 15 Mar 91

[From the "Television News Service" program]

[Text] The court of Radyanskiy Rayon, Kiev, ruled groundless the allegations by Martirosyan, USSR people's deputy, to the effect that Colonel-General Gromov is implicated in a military coup that is being prepared.

Turkish President on Official Visit to Ukraine

Holds Talks With Kravchuk

LD1303195691 Moscow TASS in English 1839 GMT 13 Mar 91

[By TASS correspondent Anatoliy Grigoryev]

[Text] Kiev March 13 TASS—Turkish President Turgut Ozal met today with his Ukrainian counterpart Leonid Kravchuk for friendly talks on ways of developing bilateral relations.

Ozal came in the Soviet Union on an official visit and is now in Kiev, capital of the Ukraine.

Ozal and Kravchuk expressed the joint desire to promote mutually beneficial cooperation in political, economic, scientific, technological, information, cultural, humanitarian and other fields.

It was stressed that the strengthening of such relations meets the basic principles of a draft treaty on the Union of Sovereign Republics and will make a practical contribution to building a common European home.

The hosts welcomed Ozal's initiative towards creating a zone of economic cooperation in the Black Sea and said

the Ukraine is prepared to be immediately involved in the project. They said that it is also interested in joining the convention for protecting the Black Sea against pollution.

Based on the experience of his country, Ozal voiced a number of considerations on how to stabilise the economy in market conditions. He said the Soviet Union has many prerequisite conditions and possibilities to overcome its current difficulties soon.

Ozal visited the Park of Eternal Glory and placed a wreath to the tomb to the unknown soldier. He also went sightseeing in the city.

A dinner was later given in his honour on behalf of the Ukrainian legislature.

Closer Ties Sought

LD1403075391 Moscow TASS in English 0728 GMT 14 Mar 91

[By UKRINFORM-TASS correspondent Aleksey Trotsenko]

[Text] Kiev March 14 TASS—The Ukraine and Turkey have the potential to transform their economic and trade links into dynamic cooperation in the near future for the benefit of their two peoples, according to Ukrainian Deputy Prime Minister Viktor Urchukin.

The Ukraine wants Turkish firms to modernise Donbass mines, which supply coal to Turkey, sugar plants and light and processing industry plants, Urchukin told Turkish business representatives accompanying President Turgut Ozal on his Soviet tour.

Urchukin called for the creation of a Ukrainian-Turkish association on foreign economic cooperation and a joint commercial bank to finance bilateral projects. Ukrainian entrepreneurs are prepared to provide up to 100 million roubles and 30 million dollars for the bank, he said.

Despite geographic proximity, Turkey and Ukraine know little about each other, Turkish Foreign Minister Ahmet Kurtcebe Alptemocin said.

An important step towards developing all-round cooperation between the two countries has been made at the meeting of their business representatives, he said.

The Turkish side regards proposals by Ukrainian business representatives with great interest, he said.

The sides agreed to hold a Turkish exhibition in Kiev in April to show the potentiality of Turkish businesses to local managers.

Ozal Cited on Domestic Issues

TA1403163691 Ankara ANATOLIA in English 1550 GMT 14 Mar 91

[Text] Kiev (A.A)—President Turgut Ozal has said it would be wrong to keep the Cyprus problem as an obstacle facing Turkey in international relations and that a reasonable solution should be brought to the question.

"I do not mean to say [words indistinct], but we should do what is reasonable," Ozal told Turkish journalists covering his six-day visit to the Soviet Union.

He did not go into specific details but said the Cyprus problem could be brought to a solution with Turkey's continuing guarantee, bi-zonality and bi-communality.

As a starting point he said the Greek Cypriot administration could form a customs union with Greece and the Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus a similar union with Turkey.

During an informal chat with journalists, Ozal advocated a free Turkey. "For a greater Turkey, we need a model of freedom. We must get off taboos," he said.

"Also if there is an ethnic problem, this should be solved," Ozal said, adding, "we have no problems with Kurds."

On penal code articles banning communism and religious fundamentalism, Ozal said "unless there is an element of forces in those (communist and fundamentalist) activities, there should be no punishment. We should not punish what are called crimes of conscience." The president also proposed the [word indistinct] of a new penal code covering terrorist activities which may anticipate postponement of some punishments.

On his Soviet Union visit, Ozal said his contacts in Moscow and the Ukrainian capital of Kiev were very positive. In his most important meetings in Moscow, Ozal met Soviet President Mikhail Gorbachev earlier this week.

Significance of Visit Cited

LD1403150891 Kiev International Service in English 0000 GMT 14 Mar 91

[Excerpts] [Announcer] Turgut Ozal, President of the Turkish Republic, arrived today [13 March] in Kiev. [passage omitted]

The president of Turkey met with the head of Ukraine's parliament, Leonid Kravchuk. Discussed at the meeting, held in a friendly atmosphere, were problems of interest for both sides. Leonid Kravchuk informed President Ozal about social and economic development of the republic under conditions of transition to market economy, as well as the political situation in Ukraine on the eve of the USSR referendum on the new union treaty and the republican plebiscite on the future of sovereign Ukraine. The leader of Ukraine's Supreme Soviet told the president of Turkey about the legislative work done by the republic's parliament. Much attention was paid to questions of bilateral relationships. In particular, both sides discussed the possibility of creating a Black Sea Economic zone that would incorporate a whole number of countries of the black sea area.

When addressing those present at the meeting, President Turgut Ozal said the following:

[Begin recording in vernacular with superimposed English translation] We have chosen Ukraine, firstly because we have longstanding relations. On the other hand, Ukraine plays an important role in the sphere of cooperation in the Black Sea area. After the adoption of the new Union treaty, the plenary powers of the republics will be determined finally, and I am sure that the scale of cooperation between Turkey and Ukraine will grow. The process of transition of plenary powers from the center to the republics will be not an easy one, but there is no alternative. First of all, I think it would be important to delegate economic rights to the republics. On the other hand, the process of privatization should be carried out. We have certain experience in this field, and we would be ready to share this experience with Ukraine. [end recording]

[Announcer] The president of Turkey also expressed a number of practical ideas dealing with the development of relations between the two republics. In particular, the opinion was expressed on the necessity of cooperation in the fields of TV communications, satellite and cable communications included. The Turkish president wished the people of Ukaine to successfully realize all the large- scale projects facing the republic, and pointed out that economic reforms are realized in Uraine, our economic cooperation will develop at higher rates.

After the meeting with Leonid Kravchuk, our reporter interviewed one of the meeting participants, head of the parliamentary commission, Volodymir Pilipchuk:

[Begin recording in vernacular with superimposed English translation] Well, the arrival of the president of Turkey, Turgut Ozal, in Ukraine is evidence of international recognition of Ukrainian statehood and sovereignty, and desire to establish business, economic, scientific, and technical relations between the two countries, the more so since we have a large-scale problem facing both Turkey and Ukraine—I mean the ecological problems If the Black Sea, and also the questions of agricultural development, which we could solve in cooperation. I think this is the beginning of Ukraine's incorporation in international relations, and recognition of Ukraine as a sovereign state, which opens up broad opportunities for our republic's integration into the world market, science, all the international institutions [end recording]

[Announcer] On behalf of the Supreme Soviet of Ukraine, a dinner was given in the Maryinskiy Palace in honor of the high guest.

Ozal Leaves Kiev for Alma-Ata

LD1403102391 Moscow TASS in English 0848 GMT 14 Mar 91

[By UKRINFORM-TASS correspondent]

[Text] Kiev March 14 TASS—President Turgut Ozal of the Republic of Turkey, who is now touring the Soviet Union, left here for Alma-Ata today.

At Borispol Airport, decked out with the state flags of Turkey, the Soviet Union and the Ukraine, Ozal and his wife were seen off by Ukrainian legislature President Leonid Kravchuk and his wife and by other officials.

Turkish and Soviet officials accompanying the Turkish president in the tour of the country left Kiev together with him.

A declaration of principles and goals of relations between the Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic and the Republic of Turkey, an agreement between the Ukrainian and Turkish governments on cultural cooperation, and a protocol of intent between the two governments to develop telecommunication systems and telephone communication were signed during Ozal's stay in Kiev.

Report on Pro-Yeltsin Ivanovo Meeting Censured

LD1403154391 Moscow Radio Rossii Network in Russian 1308 GMT 14 Mar 91

[Text] In conclusion some news from Ivanovo: The popular weekly program Dobroye Utro Ivanovtsy [Good Morning people of Ivanovo] has not gone out on the air there. It was banned by Valeriy Maksimovskiy, acting deputy chairman of the oblast television and radio committee. In the progam journalists tried to report on a meeting of democratic forces in support of Boris Yeltsin. It is characteristic that Valeriy Maksimovskiy is chairman of the deputies' commission on glasnost and the mass news media in the town soviet of people's deputies.

Caucasus

Military Abets 17 March Referendum Voting

Polling Stations Set up in Georgia

LD1703113491 Moscow TASS in English 1124 GMT 17 Mar 91

[Text] Tbilisi March 17 TASS—Those who wanted to express their attitude to the future of the Union today went to polling stations that had been set up in military units.

In defiance of demands from the leadership of Georgia, the Abkhaz and South Ossetia councils of people's deputies decided to hold the all-Union referendum on territories under their jurisdiction.

Georgian parliament President Zviad Gamsakhurdia made a statement calling on people to boycott the holding of the all-Union referendum.

Only those who will vote for the restoration of Georgia's state independence will be granted Georgian citizenship and the right to own land, he stated.

The Georgian parliament refused to hold the USSR referendum and fixed a republican one for March 31. The ballot paper will ask people: "Do you agree to the restoration of the state independence of Georgia on the strength of the act of independence dated May 26, 1918?"

NKAO Residents Stop Attempt

NC1603173091 Yerevan International Service in Armenian 2100 GMT 15 Mar 91

[Text] Following the declaration by Nagorno-Karabakh's oblast authorities on Moscow television that they do not intend to take part in the all-Union referendum, two officers from Soviet Army units stationed in Shusha immediately came to Berdadzor to organize the referendum. The Armenians of Berdadzor gave them an appropriate reception and sent them back, together with the ballot boxes, of course.

Yesterday, the President of the Soviet Union Gorbachev addressed an appeal to the people of Azerbaijan and the population of Nagorno-Karabakh. It specifically notes that Nagorno-Karabakh is an inalienable part of Azerbaijan, and in which the constitutions of the Soviet Union and of Azerbaijan are in force. For some reason, the sparkle of the presidential mind has lacked freshness for some time now. One unwittingly thinks that it has been rekindled in honor of [Turkish President] Turgut Ozal.

Violence, Tension Continue in South Ossetia

Confrontation Spreads Beyond Region

LD1803120791 Moscow TASS International Service in Russian 1105 GMT 18 MDar 91

[By TASS correspondent Albert Kochetkov]

[Text] Tbilisi, 18 Mar (TASS)—Military operations by the opposing sides in South Ossetia, which is stricken by interethnic conflict, have spread beyond the limits of that region. According to the Georgian Internal Affairs Ministry, the village of Zemo Nikozi in Goriyskiy Rayon was attacked during the night of 17 March.

In Tskhinvali, the administrative center of South Ossetia, exchanges of fire between the opposing sides again went on all night. Two houses belonging to Georgian families were burned down.

The conflict in South Ossetia flared up in December of last year after this autonomous oblast, which is part of Georgia, declared itself a Republic within the USSR. The Georgian legislature responded by declaring the abolition of that autonomy.

'Extremists' Take Hostages

AU1503172991 Tbilisi Domestic Service in Russian 1445 GMT 15 Mar 91

[Text] During the night of 15 March, Ossetian extremists again opened fire on the Georgian militia headquarters near the entrance to Tskhinvali. They also attacked the Georgian villages of Avnevi and [name indistinct]. On 14 March, [word indistinct] the bandits opened fire on automobiles in which servicemen of the Georgian Interior Ministry, who were on duty, were driving to the [name indistinct] rayon. In Tskhinvali, bandits who arrived from various regions are committing excesses. Their numerical strength, according to the operational data of the Georgian militia, exceeds 1,000 men. Many of them have occupied the communal apartments in which Georgians who escaped from Tskhinvali had lived. The Ossetian extremists took up to 20 Georgian citizens hostage, including the family of Roman (?Gurgishvili), a militia captain residing in [name indistinct]. The militiamen are taking measures to free the hostages.

'Intense' Gunfire Noted

LD1503165291 Moscow Central Television Vostok Program and Orbita Networks in Russian 1530 GMT 15 Mar 91

[Text] Here is the very latest information from S. Ossetia. The situation in the area remains tense. Intense exchanges of fire have been going on in the village of Khetaguri. Two armored vehicles, a unit of internal troops, and representatives of the Georgian Ministry of Internal Affairs and the S. Ossetian militia have been sent there by helicopter.

In another village an APC has been confiscated in which more than 2,000 live rounds have been found.

Thousands Reportedly Flee

LD1603085791 Moscow World Service in English 0800 GMT 16 Mar 91

[Text] A new outburst of violence has spread over South Ossetia. On the outskirts of the village of (Khetagurovo) of Tskhinvali district, there was an armed clash between opposing sides. The fighting went on for nearly two hours. More than 3,000 local residents were forced to hide themselves in nearby woods from criminal gangs.

Georgian armed groups have attacked the district center of Znauri. There are casualties.

Meanwhile, the SAKINFORM news agency reports the capture by extremists of about 20 hostages, who are all Georgians.

Blockades Continue

LD1703180691 Moscow TASS International Service in Russian 1506 GMT 17 Mar 91

[TASS correspondent Valeriy Shanayev]

[Text] Vladikavkaz, 17 Mar—There was intensive shooting last night on the outskirts of Tskhinvali.

As your TASS correspondent was informed at the emergency committee press center under the chairman of the North Ossetian Soviet Socialist Republic Supreme Soviet, a convoy of 30 vehicles and refrigerated trucks carrying food, medicine, and fuel, has arrived in Dzhava from Vladikavkaz under the guard of militia squads. Since all roads leading into Tskhinvali are blocked by militants, the goods were delivered to the town by helicopters.

As the press center has reported, the referendum did take place on Tskhinvali. The latest figures say that the population of blockaded Tskhinvali and refugees there took an active part in the all-Union referendum. By 1100 local time, more than 90 percent of residents—approximately 40,000 people—had voted. Also participating in the vote were subunits of USSR MVD internal troops stationed in the town, and soldiers and officers of Soviet Army units located in Tskhinvali.

Residents of a number of Ossetian villages were unable to take part in the all-Union referendum. More than 10,000 armed Georgian militants are concentrated on the outskirts of all Ossetian villages. They opened provocative fire against the residents of settlements and shouted threats against the leadership of the oblast, promising to take revenge on Ossetians who "betray the interests of a free Georgia."

Georgian Militia Attacked

LD1703110791 Moscow TASS in English 1038 GMT 17 Mar 91

[By TASS correspondent Albert Ochetkov]

[Text] Tbilisi March 17 TASS—Grenades and unguided missiles were again fired on Georgian militia posts at the entrance to Tskhinvali, the administrative centre of South Ossetia, last night, just as on previous nights, according to the press centre of the republican Interior Ministry.

Ergneti village was also fired upon. There was no loss of life, the press centre reported.

Stepanakert Residents Protest Gorbachev Appeal

NC1603141091 Yerevan Domestic Service in Armenian 1730 GMT 15 Mar 91

[Text] Stepanakert residents' national dignity, bruised by Mikhail Gorbachev's appeal yesterday addressed to the people of Azerbaijan and the population of Nagorno-Karabakh, again brought them into the streets of the city. Virtually all enterprises, organizations, and establishments of Stepanakert closed down today. Classrooms of the educational institutes were empty. Students also joined the protest.

Reminiscent of the unforgettable February of 1988, thousands of citizens gathered in the Stepanakert central square at nearly 11 am. Babayan, the chairman of the oblast soviet executive committee, told ARMENPRES that the people are unable to hide their disquiet. He added: For the last three years, we have been expecting civilized behavior from [words indistinct], yet we only get blockade, economic collapse, (?starvation), violation of basic human rights, and mockery of our national dignity from Azerbaijan and the center. We expected Moscow to restore the constitutional structures of power in the Armenian autonomous formation. Whereas, after first applying truly (?medieval) pressure on Artsakh's [Nagorno-Karabakh] people, who had credulously believed in democratic principles, they now want finally to bring the people to their knees. [words indistinct] Any attempts to hold democratic elections in Nagorno-Karabakh are impracticable, for the leadership of Azerbaijan has never hidden, and does not hide, its intentions to get rid of the oblast's population. They fooled us, and wantonly at that. Such actions could only exacerbate the already complex interethnic situation.

Despite warnings by servicemen that surrounded the square, a rally took place there today. Sargisyan, Armenian Republic people's deputy from Artsakh, spoke at the rally and specifically stated that the president of the Soviet Union has come forward with [words indistinct], instead of solving the Nagorno-Karabakh problem by political methods and restoring the soviet power in Nagorno-Karabakh, which he is under the obligation to do at the outset. The people's deputy emphasized that a people cannot be an inalienable part of another people, even if a declaration to this effect is made by (?our Artsakh) itself.

Numerous meetings took place at the work collectives in the oblast. Cables were sent to the USSR Supreme Soviet and the Armenian Republic's Supreme Soviet. They expressed the firm resolve of the Armenians of Artsakh to attain genuine self-determination and freedom.

The protests displayed a high level of political awareness without any (?incidents).

Armenian Rally Seeks Early Poll on Secession

LD1703232191 Moscow Central Television First Program Network in Russian 2128 GMT 17 Mar 91

[Report by correspondent V. Nazaryan; from the "Television News Service" program]

[Text] Outwardly, nothing in Yerevan pointed to the fact that today is a fateful one for the country. In town, life went on as usual; in the countryside, despite it being Sunday, people were busy. In these spring days, the process of privatization of land is in full swing in the republic. Armenia refused categorically to hold the all-Union referendum. Instead, it intends to hold its own plebiscite on 21 September, submitting the question of secession from the USSR to the vote. The six-month delay does not please many people in Armenia. A rally

held today at Freedom Square demanded that a referendum be held immediately. Indeed, this is stipulated especially in a decision by the republic's legislature. The Supreme Soviet Presidium has been authorized to hold a referendum in Armenia on secession from the USSR ahead of time if the situation changes drastically.

Central Asia

Voting Progress in Central Asia Reported

LD1703182791 Moscow TASS International Service in Russian 1108 GMT 17 Mar 91

[By TASS correspondent]

[Text] Moscow, 17 Mar (TASS)—Voting on the future of a renewed USSR, put to an all-Union referendum, is proceeding actively and in an organized manner in the republics of Central Asia. At most polling stations in Tashkent, the capital of Uzbekistan, over half of those on the Tashkent electoral register had already expressed their attitude to the problem of "whether or not the Union should exist" by 1100 local time.

Voting is by secret ballot and so it is difficult to talk of results as yet. Judging from what people are saying, however, one can presume that the basic mass of people in the Uzbek capital are in favor of preserving the USSR as a single federal state. The answer to the other question on a supplementary republican voting paper is also basically positive. The people were asked to answer the following question: "Do you agree that Uzbekistan should remain within a renewed Union (federation) as a republic enjoying equal rights?"

The discussion of these problems in Uzbekistan, in the press and at enterprises and organizations, has shown that an absolute majority of people of different nationalities and political and religious convictions favors preserving the Union.

A report from the Central Republican Electoral Commission of Tajikistan says that 2,440 polling stations were set up for the referendum in the republic. By 1000 local time 791,578 people, or 31.3 percent, of the republic's overall population registered to vote had done so.

However, some towns saw attempts by representatives of the Democratic Party and the Rastokhez Movement to interfere with holding the referendum. Their leaders adopted appeals to the population for a boycott of the referendum and spoke out against preserving the Union. However, to judge from reports from local authorities, there is no support for these appeals.

For the absolute majority of the people of Turkmenia the question of preserving the USSR as a renewed federation of sovereign republics enjoying equal rights was resolved long before the referendum. This was confirmed by a selective express poll of public opinion carried out yesterday in 10 towns and rural rayons. Over 96 percent of those polled expressed a desire to take part in the referendum and over 95 percent will vote to preserve the unity of the country. The first results of the referendum are a convincing indication that this is the case. By 1400 over 80 percent of citizens had voted in Turkmenia.

All 10,499 polling stations organized for the referendum opened at 0700 this morning in Kazakhstan. Voting is proceeding energetically in all areas. The people of Kazakhstan are carrying out their duty as citizens in a calm and responsible manner, understanding that their choice now will decide the fate not only of the republic and the country but also the future of the world community. Almost 10 million people here enjoy the right to express their view on the issue. The overwhelming majority of the population of the republic, which is home to over 100 nationalities, is inclined to support the Union. This was reflected in the results of a recent sociological poll of citizens, in which 83 percent of respondents favoured preserving a renewed federation while only 3.5 percent saw Kazakhstan's future as a state lying outside the USSR.

In the republics of the Transcaucasus there is an ambiguous attitude to today' event. It is well known that Armenia and Georgia decided not to hold the all-Union referendum. However, people wishing to express their views on the future of the Union turned out at polling stations at troop units in Georgia today. Soviets of people's deputies in Abkhazia and South Ossetia decided to hold the all-Union referendum on their territory, despite the demands of the Georgian leadership.

Only 10 days ago the Supreme Soviet of Azerbaijan decided that the republic would take part in the referendum. At a meeting held on the eve of the referendum with a group of USSR people's deputies who had come to Baku to observe the referendum there in accordance with a decision by the country's Supreme Soviet, Elmira Kafarova, chairman of the Supreme Soviet of the Republic of Azerbaijan, expressed the firm conviction that the majority of the people of Azerbaijan would be in favor of a union of sovereign republics enjoying equal rights. In her opinion, the negative statements made by people there on the issue are explained by the center's inconsistency in resolving the Nagorno-Karabakh problem. In this regard the chairman of the republic's parliament stressed that the pre-referendum appeal by the USSR president to the people of Azerbaijan and residents of Nagorno-Karabakh had been received positively in the republic.

[Moscow Central Television Vostok Program and Orbita Networks in Russian at 1530 GMT on 17 March, during its regularly scheduled "Vremya" newscast, reports that, as of broadcast time, over 80 percent of Kazakhstan voters, over 90 percent of Uzbekistan voters, and almost 80 percent of Tajikistan voters had already voted in the Union referendum.]

Turkey's Ozal Visits Kazakhstan

TA1503171591 Ankara Domestic Service in Turkish 1615 GMT 15 Mar 91

[Report by Selin Caglayan]

[Text] Alma Ata (AA)—Three agreements on bilateral cooperation have been signed at the end of the official talks held in Kazakhstan, the third leg of President Turgut Ozal's USSR visit.

While one of the agreements determines a general framework for the development of bilateral relations in all fields, the second one envisages the development of scientific and technical cooperation, and the third one that of cultural cooperation.

Ozal placed a wreath at the Victory Monument in Alma Ata this morning and later attended the signing ceremony for the agreements. Speaking to reporters after the signing ceremony, Ozal said that he was "extremely happy" with his visit to Kazakhstan and that he held "very good talks."

Ozal also stated that he invited President Nursultan Nazarbayev to visit Turkey.

Chatting with journalists and Nazarbayev, Ozal said: I hope that relations between our countries will develop greatly. We will try to extend every possible aid and support we can.

Recalling that he had visited the USSR and Uzbekistan while he was Turkey's prime minister, Ozal noted that his wish to visit Kazakhstan and Azerbaijan this time stemmed from Turkey' historic ties with the peoples of these republics.

Pointing out that Turkey's relations with Central Asian republics will develop speedily from now on, Ozal said that Turkish businessmen and journalists who have been accompanying him on his tour of Kazakhstan have held contacts with their counterparts. Ozal said: This first visit will be followed by others.

Stressing that Turkey and Kazakhstan have a lot to learn from one another, Ozal said that Turkey is ready to help Kazakhstan make use of Turkey's experiences in its efforts toward reorganization.

Nazarbayev said that the fact that the Turkish president is the first head of state to visit Kazakhstan following its declaration of sovereignty "carries historic significance."

Nazarbayev, who frequently interrupted Ozal to ask "how did you do it?" and who apologized for the interruptions, said that during the talks Ozal dwelt upon the significance of the transition to a market economy. He added that Ozal spoke in favor of a realistic exchange rate and the need to create free working conditions for all entrepreneurs.

In conclusion, Nazarbayev said that they have reached a unity of views in principle to create a sphere of extensive cooperation with Turkey in order to make use especially of raw materials.

It is reported that at the talks the issue of beginning airline service between Istanbul and Alma Ata and mutually opening representations in the capitals of Turkey and Kazakhstan were also taken up.

Kazakhstan Foreign Minister (Akmaral Ariftambekova) said that Ozal's visit will be a turning point from the viewpoint of developing relations between the peoples of Kazakhstan and Turkey.

In a statement to Anatolia Agency correspondents, (Ariftambekova) said that, with this visit, bilateral relations will enter a phase of profound development in all fields.

Noting that the peoples of Kazakhstan and Turkey, who have a common history, culture, and language, should get better acquainted with one another, (Ariftambekova) invited Turkish artists to visit Kazakhstan.

Speaking to an Anatolia Agency correspondent, the culture minister of Kazakhstan said: We have a common language, religion, culture, and history. We had been apart for a while, we are now reuniting.

The minister further stated that bilateral cultural cooperation is being conducted "in an excellent manner" as a result of the agreements reached so far.

Ozal will participate in the Friday prayers in Alma Ata today and will then leave for Baku in Azerbaijan.

Agreements Signed

LD1503215691 Moscow TASS in English 2022 GMT 15 Mar 91

[By TASS correspondent Konstantin Borodinov]

[Text] Alma-Ata March 15 TASS—Turkish President Turgut Ozal staying in the Soviet Union on an official visit and Kazakh President Nursultan Nazarbaev signed on Friday a cooperation agreement between the two republics. It expresses the desire to expand and deepen mutually advantageous cooperation in the political, trade, economic, scientific, technical and other spheres on a long-term basis.

The two sides signed protocols on trade and economic cooperation between the governments of the two republics and between their foreign ministries.

Turgut Ozal invited Kazakh President Nursultan Nazarbaev to pay a visit to Turkey. The invitation was accepted with gratitude.

In the evening the Turkish delegation left for Baku.

Interest Expressed in Joint Ventures

LD1403194191 Moscow TASS in English 1929 GMT 14 Mar 91

[Text] Alma Ata March 14 TASS—President Turgut Ozal of Turkey, who is visiting the Soviet Union at the invitation of President Mikhail Gorbachev, arrived in Alma Ata, the capital of Kazakhstan, to meet its President Nursultan Nazarbayev for talks on expanding economic, trade, scientific and cultural cooperation between Turkey and that Soviet central Asian republic.

Turgut Ozal showed great interest in prospects for joint activity on the basis of effective use of Kazakhstan's mighty natural and economic potential and its labour resources. He pointed to a number of priority directions for successful, mutually beneficial cooperation. He said Turkish experience of designing modern telecommunication systems could be widely used in Kazakhstan.

President Nazarbayev of Kazakhstan briefed Ozal on the situation in the republic economy and its natural riches requiring modern technologies. For instance, he said, both sides can profit from the establishment of joint ventures in automobile building, processing secondary resources, especially in metallurgy, and producing fur coats and furs.

Charges Dropped Against Dushanbe Officials

PM1503153391 Moscow KOMSOMOLSKAYA PRAVDA in Russian 14 Mar 91 p 1

[A. Lukin report: "No Corpus Delicti"]

[Text] Dushanbe—The Tajik SSR [Soviet Socialist Republic] Prosecutor's Office has dismissed the cases of those charged in February 1990 in Dushanbe City in view of the lack of a corpus delicti.

I remind readers that charges of attempting to remove the lawful government of Tajikistan by anticonstitutional means were brought against B. Karimov, the then chairman of the republic Gosplan [State Planning Committee], Kh. Khamidov, chief of the MVD [Ministry of Internal Affairs] Political Department, N. Tabarov, minister of culture, and others. At the time they were incriminated by their preparation of an illegal Tajik SSR Supreme Soviet decree removing the chairman of the republic Council of Ministers from his post.